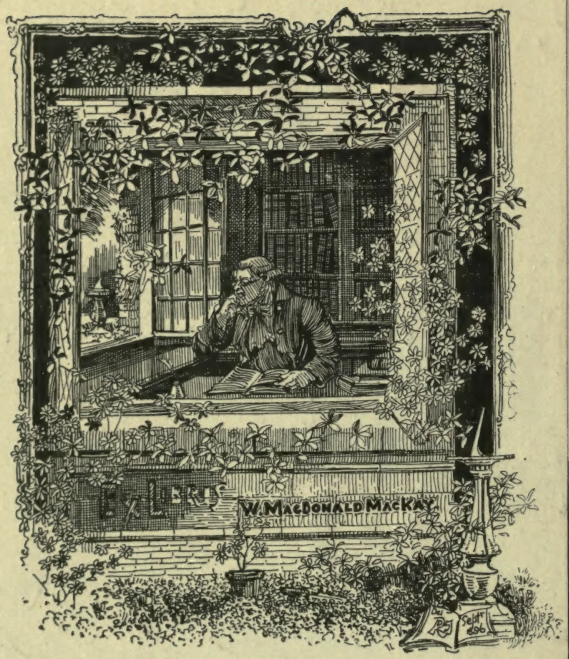
THE MINSTRELSY OF ISIS

POEMS RELATING TO OXFORD

EDITED BY J. B. FIRTH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THE MINSTRELSY OF ISIS

OXFORD FROM THE CHERWELL IN 1797

From a Water-colour by DAYES *in the University Galleries*

Frontispiece

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THE MINSTRELSY OF ISIS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF POEMS RELATING TO OXFORD AND ALL PHASES OF OXFORD LIFE: SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY J. B. FIRTH

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REGINENSIS
REGINENSIBUS

INTRODUCTION

A WORD may be said as to the principle on which the selection of the poems in this anthology has been made. The choice lay between a generous comprehensiveness and a somewhat narrow exclusiveness. If only verses of high poetic excellence had been admitted, this book would have been considerably smaller. But its interest must have been greatly diminished, for practically all the eighteenth-century pieces would have been excluded, and that was not to be thought of. The principle of comprehensiveness, therefore, was adopted, and room has been found for any verses of intrinsic interest, even though deficient—and sometimes the deficiency is marked—in poetic quality. After all, it is to be remembered that Tickell, Warton, Shenstone, and many other versifiers of their class were accounted fine poets in their day, and that Oxford taste heartily approved them and their style. I have therefore given these a place, though I have not thought it necessary to extend a like hospitality to any vapid lines from Pye or Whitehead—Laureates both. Modern taste, again, finds the eighteenth-century official ode insufferably pompous and tedious. But it was a regular feature on all great University occasions in the Sheldonian Theatre, and was doubtless vastly admired. Indeed, it lingered on into the middle of the nineteenth century, and so late as 1834 Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Chancellor and first Earl of Selborne, recited an ode before the Duke of Wellington which contained such lines as

> Let all I dare not speak come on !
> We will not fear
> While thou art near !

But here, too, we must not gird at a custom which blossomed in its decrepitude into such a perfect flower as the ode which the present Archbishop of Armagh wrote in 1854 on the Installation of the Earl of Derby as Chancellor of the University.

It is sometimes said, and, what is worse, believed, that Oxford has produced very few poets of distinction. As "a nest of singing-birds," to apply to the University the phrase which Dr. Johnson—with greater patriotism, perhaps, than accuracy—uttered of Pembroke College, her brood may be surpassed by that of Cambridge. Yet the Oxford poets make noble showing. In Elizabethan and Stuart days they numbered Sidney and Spenser, Raleigh, Peele, Wither, Wotton, Carew, Ford, Heywood, Beaumont, Lovelace, Braithwaite, and a score of singers of the Restoration. In the days of Queen Anne Oxford had Addison and Steele. And though in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century true poetry languished and Collins, Warton, Bowles, and Southey are a poor offset to Gray, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, Oxford can claim among her later sons Shelley, Landor, Keble, Newman, Faber, Clough, Matthew Arnold, William Morris, Sir Lewis Morris, Lord de Tabley, Sir Edwin Arnold; and the most distinguished of living English poets, Mr. Swinburne, was at Balliol in the late 'Fifties.

It will be seen with regret that many of these names are very sparsely represented in the pages which follow. The greatest Oxford poets—saving Matthew Arnold, the truest representative of her culture—have not written of Oxford. Shelley, the sweetest singer of all, was cast out with ignominy by University College. Addison wrote polished but tedious Latin poems on the Magdalen bowling-green and Magdalen Chapel, but never turned

a single stanza on the river-walk which now bears his name. William Morris, for all his love of Oxford and her water-meadows, has not left a line in their praise. And so on. The finest sonnet on Oxford, Wordsworth's, was the product of a stranger's love. It must be confessed that Oxford's chief poets have been remiss in showing their devotion to their Alma Mater.

Perhaps it is more the function of a Professor of Poetry to expound and criticise the poetry of others than to write verse himself. But in any case the Oxford Professors of Poetry have added but little to the stock of Oxford poetry. They have loved their University, but they have not sung of her. Indeed, some do not seem to have sung at all. The Professorship is just two centuries old. Dr. Trapp, the first holder of the office, is remembered only by two biting epigrams. Of his eighteenth-century successors Thomas Warton the younger is just remembered, but not read, while James Hurdis is best known as a friend of Cowper, and his best poems have occasional pleasant touches of Cowper's gentleness, simplicity, and love of nature. The nineteenth-century Professors of Poetry include H. H. Milman, J. Keble, T. L. Claughton, M. Arnold, F. D. Doyle, J. C. Shairp, F. T. Palgrave, and W. J. Courthorpe. But, with the exception of Matthew Arnold, their Oxford verses are almost negligible. Keble, the least academic of them all, of whose "Christian Year" Wordsworth said that he would like to prepare an emended edition, wrote a sonnet on Bagley Wood ; Professor Shairp wrote "The Balliol Scholars," a retrospective poem, chiefly interesting because of the high distinction which the members of this little coterie attained in after years ; the rest—nothing. Matthew Arnold, it is true, makes rich amends for many omissions. He shed a lustre

on the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford similar to that which Wordsworth and Tennyson shed on the Poet Laureateship. "The Scholar Gipsy" and "Thyrsis" are, and are likely to remain, the two great Oxford poems, and to all Oxford men the pleasant upland country on the Berkshire side of the Thames, within the great loop of the river, must ever be associated with Arnold's name. "I cannot describe," he wrote in 1885, "the effect which this landscape always has upon me—the hillside with its valleys and Oxford in the great Thames valley below."

And yet, though Oxford's chiefest poets have rendered her inadequate tribute, her less favoured sons have sung her praises very sweetly, and many poems in this anthology will appeal straight to the heart of every Oxford man. Something of the irresistible, incommunicable charm of Oxford will be found in their verses—fragments it may be, yet precious fragments. For these poems are so obviously sincere. They record feelings and emotions which every good son of Oxford has himself experienced and longed to find expression for, whether in the happy moment of actual enjoyment of her life, or in the sadness of parting, or in the mingled hour of brief and occasional return. It will be noticed how common is the theme of Oxford Revisited, and how perfectly in several instances it has been handled. And many other poems have caught with real felicity the haunting beauty of the place and the wistful backward look of those who recall the joys and follies and friendships of their youth.

The various sections speak for themselves. They give glimpses of all phases of Oxford life from century to century, grave and gay, alert and slothful, the city of learning and pleasure, of careless youth and reverend age. The section devoted to "Lighter Verse" might have been

very largely increased, especially if room had been found for specimens of those parodies which undergraduate wit so largely affects. But these pieces are exceedingly ephemeral, and the flavour of their humour does not endure. The section of Epigrams, again, is by no means so representative as I could have wished it to be; but epigrams are elusive things which even the best memories have a trick of forgetting. Perhaps those of my readers who can add to the number will kindly send me others for future inclusion, if another edition of this book should be required. It may be mentioned that "The Masque of Balliol," one of the cleverest Oxford *jeux d'esprit* of recent years, has not been omitted through inadvertence. Its authors, now in a position of less freedom and greater responsibility, like some of those whose foibles they handled so deftly, blush to find their happy effort fame.

One other word. All anthologists commit sins of omission and overlook flowers which a closer search might have revealed. I hope that those who take pleasure in this Oxford posy will help to make it more perfect by gathering and sending to me any choice bloom or shy wildflower which has escaped my exploring glance.

My obligations are wide, and only in very few instances have I been obliged, for reasons of copyright, to omit poems which I wished to include. My thanks are especially due to Dr. T. H. Warren (President of Magdalen) for "Addison's Walk" and "May Day on Magdalen Tower," from "By Severn Sea" (John Murray); to Rev. A. G. Butler for "The Master," from the *Oxford Magazine*, "Oxford to London," from "The Choice of Achilles and other Poems" (Frowde), and lines from "Religio Academici," from "Harold and other Poems" (Frowde); to Mr. Reginald Fanshawe for stanzas from "Corydon: an Elegy" (Frowde); to Mr. Gascoigne

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I have also to thank the following publishers for permission to use copyright poems: Messrs. Macmillan for M. Arnold's "Thyrsis," and for J. C. Shairp's "Balliol Scholars," from "Glen Desseray and other Poems"; Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench for Sir Lewis Morris' "To an Unknown Poet," from the collected edition of his poems, and Sir Edwin Arnold's "Oxford Revisited," from "Selected Poems"; Messrs. Elkin Mathews for Lionel Johnson's "Oxford," "Bagley Wood," and "Oxford Nights"; Messrs. Longmans, Green for Mr. Andrew Lang's "The Ballade of the Summer Term," from "XXXII Ballades of Blue China," and "Freshman's Term," from "Ban and Arrière Ban"; Messrs. Methuen for Mr. A. Godley's "Distant Prospect of Oriel College," "Doctrinae Sedes" and "Valde Retro Sathanas," from "Lyra Frivola," "Second Strings," and "Verses to Order"; Messrs. Blackwood for Mr. Alfred Noyes' "Oxford Revisited," from "Forty Singing Seamen and other Poems"; Messrs. Bowes and Bowes for Mr. Hartley Carrick's "Oxford Revisited" and "A Ballade of the Cambridge Backs," from "A Muse in Motley"; Messrs. Parker for Mr. P. B. Duncan's "Pictures of the Comforts of a Professor's Rooms," from Professor Daubeny's "Fugitive Poems Connected with Natural History and Physical Science."

I have also drawn copiously upon the *Oxford Magazine*, by the kind permission of its editor, Mr. Brownrigg, and the Delegates of the Clarendon Press. I must thank Canon H. D. Rawnsley for "Snake's Head Lilies in Iffley Meads," Mr. Arthur Sidgwick for "Terminalia," Mr. A. R. Bayley for "Sunday Afternoon at Iffley," and the Rev. W. J. Ferrar for "In Wytham Woods." I have not been able to identify "L. B.," "B. N.," "Emeritus," "G. N. N.," "S.," "G. W. W.," and the anonymous authors of "The Don

Fin de Siècle," "Cleansing Fires," "Above Bablockhythe," "Before the Eights," and "For a Visitor's Album," but I hope they will allow me to presume their consent to the inclusion of their verses.

Lastly, I must express my obligations to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, the Keeper of the University Galleries, Bodley's Librarian, and the authorities of the British Museum for permission to reproduce water-colours and engravings to serve as illustrations to this book.

JOHN B. FIRTH.

September 1908.

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OXFORD

He that hath Oxford seen, for beauty, grace
And healthiness ne'er saw a better place.
If God Himself on earth abode would make
He Oxford, sure, would for his dwelling take.

DAN ROGERS (about 1580).

Parce viae longae; dabit una Oxonia quicquid
Ausonia ora vagos Hellas Idume docet.

DAN ROGERS.

Ancient Oxford, noble nurse of skill,
A Citie seated ritche in everye thinge,
Girte with wood and water, pasture, corne and hill.

AUGUSTUS RYTHER, 1588.

Eque suis (si qua sit laude ea digna fatetur)
Laudibus, haec summa est, Oxoniensis erat.

SIR JOHN STRADLING, 1607.

Youth, ere it sees the world, here studies rest
And age, returning thence, concludes it best.

J. DRYDEN.

Me tenet Oxonii vitae sincera voluptas
Tranquillae, et vacuae placidissima gaudia mentis.

DIALOGUS IN THEATRO SHELDONIANO, 1773.

ODE TO THE EARL OF DERBY ON HIS INSTALLATION AS CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY, JUNE 1, 1853

I HAD been thinking of the antique masque
Before high peers and peeresses at Court,
Of the strong gracefulness of Milton's task,
"Rare Ben's" gigantic sport——

Those delicate creations, full of strange
And perilous stuff, wherein the silver flood
And crownèd city suffered human change
Like things of flesh and blood.

And I was longing for a hand like those
Somewhere in bower of learning's fine retreat,
That it might fling immortally one rose
At Stanley's honoured feet.

Fair as that woman whom the Prophet old
In Ardath met, lamenting for her dead,
With sackcloth cast above the tiar of gold
And ashes on her head,

Methought I met a lady yester-even;
A passionless grief, that had nor tear nor wail,
Sate on her pure, proud face, that gleamed to Heaven
White as a moonlit sail.

She spake, "On this pale brow are looks of youth,
Yet angels, listening on the argent floor,
Know that these lips have been proclaiming truth
Nine hundred years and more.

"And Isis knows what time-grey towers reared up,
Gardens and groves and cloistered halls are mine,
Where quaff my sons from many a myrrhine cup
Draughts of ambrosial wine.

"He knows how night by night my lamps are lit,
How day by day my bells are ringing clear,
Mother of ancient lore and Attic wit
And discipline severe.

"It may be long ago my dizzied brain
Enchanted swam beneath Rome's wondrous spell,
Till like light tinctured by the painted pane
Thought in *her* colours fell.

"Yet when the great old tongue with strong effect
Woke from its sepulchre across the sea,
The subtler spell of Grecian intellect
Worked mightily in me.

"Time passed—my groves were full of warlike stirs;
The student's heart was with the merry spears,
Or keeping measure to the clanking spurs
Of Rupert's Cavaliers.

"All those long ages, like a holy mother,
I reared my children to a lore sublime,
Picking up fairer shells than any other
Along the shores of Time.

"And must I speak at last of sensual sleep,
The dull forgetfulness of aimless years?
Oh! let me turn away my head and weep
Than Rachel's bitterer tears—

"Tears for the passionate hearts I might have won,
Tears for the age with which I might have striven,
Tears for a hundred years of work undone,
Crying like blood to Heaven.

"I have repented—and my glorious name
Stands scutcheoned round with blazonry more bright.
The withered rod, the emblem of my shame,
Bloomed blossoms in a night.

"And I have led my children on steep mountains,
By fine attraction of my spirit brought
Up to the dark inexplicable fountains
That are the springs of thought.

"Led them where on the old poetic shore
The flowers that change not with the changing moon
Breathe round young hearts, as breathes the sycamore
About the bees in June.

"And I will bear them, as on eagle wings,
To leave them bowed before the sapphire throne,
High o'er the haunts, where dying pleasure sings
With sweet and swanlike tone.

"And I will lead the age's great expansions,
Progressive circles toward thought's Sabbath rest,
And point beyond them to the many mansions
Where Christ is with the blest.

"Am I not pledged who gave my bridal ring
To that old man heroic, strong and true;
Whose grey-haired virtue was a nobler thing
Than even Waterloo?

"Surely that spousal morn my chosen ones
Felt their hearts moving to mysterious calls,
And the old pictures of my sainted sons
Looked brighter from the walls.

"He sleeps at last—no wind's tempestuous breath
Played a dead march upon the moaning billow,
What time God's angel visited with death
The old Field-Marshal's pillow.

"There was no omen of a great disaster,
Where castled Walmer stands beside the shore;
The evening clouds, like pillared alabaster,
Hung huge and silent o'er.

"The moon in brightness walked the fleecy rack,
Walked up and down among the starry fires;
Heaven's great cathedral was not hung with black
Up to its topmost spires.

"But mine own Isis kept a solemn chiming,
A silver requiescat all night long,
And mine old trees with all their leaves were timing
The sorrow of the song.

"And through mine angel-haunted aisles of beauty,
From the grand organs gushed a music dim,
Lauds for a champion who had done his duty
I knew they were for him!

"But night is fading—I must deck my hair
For the high pageant of the gladsome morn;
I would not meet my chosen Stanley there
In sorrow, or in scorn.

"I know him nobler than his noble blood,
Seeking for wisdom as the earth's best pearl,
And bring my brightest jewelry to stud
The baldrick of my Earl.

"I and my children, with our fairest gift,
With song will meet him, and with music's swell;
The coronal a king might love to lift,
It will beseem him well.

"And when the influx of the perilous fight
Shall be around us as a troubled sea,
He will remember, like a red-cross knight,
God, and this day, and me."

WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D.
Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland.

TO MY MUCH HONOURED AND INTIRELY BELOVED PATRONESSE, THE MOST FAMOUS UNIVERSITIE OF OXFORD

TO mount above Ingratitude (base crime)
With double lines of single-twisted Rime,
I will (though needlesse) blaze the Sun-bright praise
Of Oxford where I spend some gaining * daies ;
Who entertaines me with that kind regard,
That my best words her worst deedes should reward.
For, like a Lady full of roialtie,
She gives me Crownes for my Charactery † ;
Her pupils crowne me for directing them,
Where, like a King, I live, without a Realme.
They praise my precepts and my lessons learne,
So doth the worse the better wel governe.
But Oxford, Oh, I praise thy situation
Passing Parnassus, Muses' habitation !
Thy bough-deckt-dainty walkes, with Brooks beset
Fretty, like Christall Knots, in mould of Jet.
Thy sable Soile's like Guian's golden Ore,
And gold it yeelds, manured ; no mould can more.
The pleasant Plot, where thou hast footing found,
For all it yeelds, is yelke ‡ of English ground.
Thy stately Colledges like Princes' courtes,
Whose gold embossèd, high embattled Ports, §
With all the glorious workmanshippe within,
Make Strangers deeme they have in Heaven bin,
When out they come from those celestiall places,
Amazing them with glorie and with graces.

* *I.e.*, gainful.
† Penmanship.
‡ *I.e.*, yolk.
§ *I.e.*, gates.

But in a word to say how I like thee,
For place, for grace and for sweet companee,
Oxford is Heaven, if Heaven on Earth there be.

Sir John Davies (of Hereford).
1560–1618.
Master of Penmanship to Prince Henry, son of James I.

MY LOVE IS OXFORD

EACH man his country loves. Ulisses' wish
Was to see Ithack's smoke (smoke little worth)
Each cares for country—I care not a rush,
I loath to live where I was first brought forth.
Now goe I home as Hannibal once went
To native Affrick, sad and discontent.
We hate our countries—would you needs know why?
My love is Oxford; his was Italy.

THOMAS FREEMAN.
Student of Magdalen in 1607.

IN OXONIAM

Ille terrarum mihi præter omnes
Angulus ridet.

ENGLAND'S faire Athens, Youth's thrice happy Nurse,
Nature's refiner, Learning's Consistory,
Refuge whereto the Muses have recourse,
And where to be the Graces chiefly glory.
Pardon thy Pupil's high presuming pen,
That dares thy praise ambitiously adventer,
Each little streame repaies the Ocean
His borrowed waves and doth the sea re-enter.
My selfe with like gratuity incenst
Returne to thee (from whom it first sprang forth)
That little wit, that heretofore thou lentst
To legend out thy true deservèd worth.
But out alas! what rellish hath my riming
It can but be a blemish to the breeder,
And I shall be controulèd for high climing,
Methinkes I heare already from the Reader;
Who tells me in my talking thus so boldly,
"Better be silent than commend so coldly."

THOMAS FREEMAN (1614).

From "Rub and a Great Cast."

TO OXFORD (1650)

"FOR a close, I should say for custome, you fall on my person and tell me I am a very unnaturall son to my mother Oxford. Do not then prophane her name with thy rude, illiterate chops. I am, thou knowest, Mastix, a notable wag and a saucy boy, whom she hath sometimes dandled on her knees. She hath commanded me to be an enemie to thee, because thou art an enemie to Truth, but to my mother I am a very naturall loving child. If thou canst but read, here are a few sighes I breathed over her when thy father Presbyter destroyed her."

Drie pumic statues! can you have an eye
And have no teares, to see your mother dye?
Were you not taught such numbers to rehearse
Might make the marble weep to bear your verse?
Or those lesse polished quarries, where each part
Acts by infusèd malice of the heart?
She heaved your fancies higher than the pride
Of all her pinnacles, and would have dy'd
Blest in her martydome, had you but shed
A teare, to prove her children were not dead.
Such drops and pearls had sent her sparkling hence
A constellation, and your influence
To all her woes had been a just relief,
Because your life was argued by your grief.
But you kept back those joyes, which even Fate
In all her malice thought not to translate;
You spend not one poor sigh for her last breath,
That we may say she lived before her death.
Yet hath she comforts, which proceed from thence
Where grief hath lost the tyrannie of sense,

When on those reliques she doth cast an eye,
Whom Death hath lodged where her foundations lye.
Their dust—when all is gone—remains within,
Onely to tell, how fertil she hath been.
But I forbeare; perhaps you have new arts
Not to spend eyes at funerals, but hearts.
Who in the wash of teares sets Oxford forth,
Mourns at a rate and circumscribes her worth;
Such lay-resents become not this her day,
'Twere malice to lament the common way,
Unlesse we could place knowledge in the eye,
And thence distill it to an elegie.
Who threds his teares into such learnèd beades
Is a professor when he weeps, not reades.
Nor would our Oxford grieve to dye, could shee
In such a bracelet wear her Heptarchie.
But since—deare Mother!—I cannot expresse
Thy desolations in their own sad dresse,
Give my soul leave to studie a degree,
Of sorrow, that may fit my fate and thee,
And till my eyes can weep what I can think,
Spare my fond teares, and here accept my ink.

THOMAS VAUGHAN (Eugenius Philalethes).

Twin brother of the Silurist, and with him at Jesus College.

OXFORD, THAT FAIR CITY: AN ECLOGUE

WATTY. And that faire city, that as farre exceeds
Our towne as Cedars doe excell the reeds,
That famous Academ and happy Place
Beloved of Phœbus and of Memories race,
That, filled with springes of more renowned account
Than Aganippe or Libethris fount,
More rich in knowledge and deep learning flowes
Than others doe in mercenary showes,
Filled studious Meredic with store of arts.

Willy. And ripe Brianoled with wondrous parts.

Watty. Young Meredic, as he was freind to me,
So freinded by my greatest freind was he;
And there on Baliol's and their bounty fed.

Willy. Great Maudlin's streames refreshed Brianoled.

Watty. Rare Meredic ranks early with Divines.

Willy. Rare wisdom in Brianoled so shines
That he in Philosophique chaire doeth sit.

Watty. Sage Meredic expoundeth holy writ,
And like a Shep-heard true, the joyfull fame
Of our Redemption and Redeemer's name
That there he learned, in every place he spred.

Willy. Brianoled fed flockes where he was fed,
And where the wondrous knowledge he did reach
Of Pipe, and starres, he did as freely teach.

Watty. But as the Lambe that most maturely growes
Unhappy slaughter sooner undergoes;

Willy. As store of fruit makes the abounding tree
To stoop, and burthens bow the bearing knee:

Watty. As ripest eares of wheat doe soonest shed,
Is Meredic in early ripeness dead.

Willy. As fairest flower's soone blasted in his prime,
Brianoled fell in his flow'ring time.

WILLIAM BASSE (1583–1653).

OXFORD IN MAY *

IN every tower that Oxford has is swung,
Quick, loud, or solemn the monotonous tongue
Which speaks Time's language, the universal one
After the countenance of moon or sun,
Translating their still motions to the earth.
I cannot read; the reeling belfry's mirth
Troubles my senses; therefore, Greek, shut up
Your dazzling pages; covered be the cup
Which Homer has beneath his mantle old,
Steamy with boiling life; your petals fold
You fat, square blossoms of the yet young tree
Of Britain-grafted, flourishing Germany.
Hush, Latin, to your grave:—and with the chime,
My pen shall turn the minutes into rhyme,
And, like the dial, blacken them. There sits,
Or stands, or lounges, or perhaps on bits
Of this rag's daughter, paper, exorcises,
With strange black marks and inky wild devices,
The witch of worlds, the echo of great verse,
About the chasms of the universe,
Ringing and bounding immortality.
Give him thy bosom, dark Melpomene,
And let him of thy goblet and thine eye
Exhaust the swimming, deep insanity.
He hath the soul, O let it then be fed,
Sea after sea, with that which is not read,
Nor wrung by reasoning from a resolute head,
But comes like lightning on a hill-top steeple,
Heaven's spillings on the lofty laurelled people.
Verse to thee, light to thee, wings upraise thee long
In the unvacillating soar of song,

* Letter to Bryan Waller Procter, Esq.

Thou star-seed of a man! But do not dare
To tempt thy Apollonian god too far,
Clogging and smoking thy young snake, Renown,
In the strait, stony shadows of the town,
Lest he grow weak and pine, and never be
What he was born, twin to Eternity.
So come, shake London from thy skirts away:
So come, forget not it is England's May!
For Oxford, ho! by moonlight or by sun:
Our horses are not hours, but rather run,
Foot by foot faster than the second-sand,
While the old sun-beam, like a plough, doth stand
Stuck in thick heaven. Here thou at morn shalt see
Spring's dryad-wakening whisper call the tree,
And move it to green answers: and beneath,
Each side the river which the fishes breathe,
Daisies and grass, whose tops were never stirred,
Or dews made tremulous, but by foot of bird.
And you shall mark in spring's heaven-tapestried room
Yesterday's knoppe, burst by its wild perfume,
Like woman's childhood, to this morning's bloom;
And here a primrose pale beneath a tree
And here a cowslip longing for its bee,
And violets and lilies every one
Grazing in the great pasture of the sun,
Beam after beam, visible as the grass
Is swallowed by the lazy cows that pass.
Come look, come walk—and there shall suddenly
Seize you a rapture and a phantasy;
High over mountain sweeping, fast and high
Through all the intricacies of the sky,
As fast and far a ship-wrecked hoard of gold
Dives ocean, cutting every billow's fold.

These are the honey-minutes of the year
Which make man god, and make a god—Shakespeare.
Come, gather them with me . . . . If not, then go,
And with thee all the ghosts of Jonson's toe,
And fighting Tartars and the Carthaginians :
And may your lady-muse's stiff-winged pinions
Be naked and impossible to fly,
Like a fat goose pen-plucked for poetry.
A curse upon thy cream to make it sour !
A curse upon thy tea-pot every hour !
Spirits of ice possess it ! and thy tea,
Changed at its contact, hay and straw leaves be !
A cold and nipping ague on thy urn !
And an invisible canker eat and burn
The mathematic picture, near your fire,
Of the grave, compass-handed, quiet sire !
No more.—Be these the visions of your sorrow
When you have read this doggerel through to-morrow,
And then refuse to let our Oxford borrow
You of the smoky-faced Augustan town,
And unpersuaded drop the paper down.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES (Pembroke College, 1825).
1803–49.

OXFORD IN WINTER

CITY of wildest sunsets, which do pile
  Their dark-red castles on that woody brow!
Fair as thou art in summer's moonlight smile,
  There are a hundred cities fair as thou,
But still with thee alone, all seasons round,
Beauty and change in their own right abound.

Whole wintry days swift rainy lights descend,
  Ride o'er the plain upon the swelling breeze,
And in a momentary brightness blend
  Walls, towns, and flooded streets, and leafless trees;
Lights of such glory as may not be seen
In the deep northern vales and mountains green.

Coy city, that doth swathe thy summer self
  In willow lines and elmy avenue,
Each winter comes and brings some hidden pelf,
  Buttress, or cross, or gable out to view;
While his thin sunlight frugal lustre sheds
On the straight streams and yellow osier beds.

But thy main glory is that winter wood,
  With its dead fern and holly's Christmas green,
And mosses pale and trees that have not strewed
  Their withered leaves, which yet perchance are seen
Struggling to reach the spring, as though for them
New sap would rise from out the grateful stem.

A wood in winter is a goodly sight,
  With branch and trunk and whitely-withered weed
Chiefly a wood like this, where many a night
  In Stuart times the Cavalier's fast steed

Spurned the dry leaves through all the rustling copse
And waked the cushat in the oak-tree tops.

O Bagley! thou art fair at break of day,
When freshest incense breathes from waking flowers,
Fair when the songless noon hath come to lay
Her spell of sylvan silence on thy bowers;
But night is thine enchantment, magic night,
When all is vast and strange and dusky bright.

The winter night when, as a welcome boon,
Down giant stems the stealthy beams may glide,
And the stray sheep lie sleeping in the moon,
With their own fairy shadows at their side;
While through the frosty night-air every tower
In Abingdon and Oxford tolls the hour.

Yea, on a poet's word, good men should go,
And up and down thy lurking valleys climb;
Thy faded woodlands, thy fair withered show,
Are sweet to see; and at cathedral-time
'Tis sweet on some wild afternoon to hear,
Far off, those loud complaining bells brought near.

They may have sadness, too, whene'er the wind
Keeps moaning here and there about the woods;
And fear may track their homeward steps behind
Along the moated path and reedy floods;
For in the stream the moon's white image rides,
And as they change, she also changeth sides.

Why is it, city of all Seasons! why?
So few have homes where there are homes so fair?

They come and go, it is thy destiny,
  Which for its very greatness thou must bear.
To be a nation's heart, thou city dear!
Sending thy young blood from thee every year.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER (Balliol College).
1814-63.

OXFORD FROM SHOTOVER STILE

"NOTHING remains but Beauty." He said and, wearily sighing,
Sat upon Shotover stile, gazing on Oxford below,
Minaret-crowned St. Mary's, and Magdalen Tower, and Merton,
Far-off jewels of light, fringed with a circle of shade,
Set in the shining floods. Oh! not alone in the sunshine
Fair, yet fairer the faith, glory of men who believed,
Mother of noble works, which built them there in the foretime,
Dreaming of God; then woke, strong to a labour divine.
Strong with a magical skill, a noble army of builders,
Early afoot, with prayer carving their vision in stone,
Flower of the field, and lily, and leaf, and traceried window,
Endless vanishing lines, as when a forest is bare!
As when a forest is clothed, that arch! that forest of arches,
Mystical, echoing! Hark! Music of angels is there,
Melody Magdalen-chanted; afar it rose in the distance,
Bringing a prayer to the lip, bringing a tear to the eye,
Borne on the breeze, or fancied. We sate. The city illumined
Shone as a rose; night shades slowly beginning to fall.
Ah! what a vision was there! But then a vapour ascending
Rose over turret and spire, crept over College and Hall,
Death-white, all-enfolding. As when from marshy Maremma,
Rises a poisonous breath, ghastly—inhale it and die!

OXFORD FROM THE SOUTH SIDE OF HEADINGTON HILL

Drawn by J. M. W. TURNER *and engraved by* J. BASIRE, 1805

To face p. 22

"Look! that is me," he whispered. "I had it once, I am certain,
Once I had faith. But now! Now there is mist over all."

ARTHUR GRAY BUTLER (Oriel College).

From "Religio Academici."

OXFORD TO LONDON
TO G. J. GOSCHEN

O FRIEND, who, labouring for the State,
With sittings early, sittings late,
Dost know thy soul with righteous anger
At party violence, party hate:

To see our Senate's old renown
'Mid faction's darkening surges drown,
And many a name of purer splendour
Setting, and like a star go down;

To hear the howl, the hiss, the cry,
The blatant taunt, the bandied lie,
Where, saved through laws that guarded order,
The friends of anarchy law defy.

To long—and scarce to deem it sin—
To hear some Cromwell enter in,
And, England's mandate stern behind him,
For freedom's honour end discord's din.

Then come and quit the heated hall,
The strife, the mock division's call,
Come, and amid old friends at Oxford,
In peace and beauty, forget it all!

Come, and where breaks a softer ray
On walls with centuries sere and grey,
'Mid memories old as Saxon Alfred,
Refresh your heart with the heart of May!

In meads where couch the slumberous kine
With kingcup and with cowslip fine,

By many a College ivy-mantled,
Trellised with rose and eglantine;

Or lawns like emerald velvet laid
'Mid whispering cloisters' dim arcade;
And walks by student-dreamer trodden
Leafy and cool in their elm trees' shade.

Or, sweeter still, arched boughs between,
To trace the twilight-glimmering scene,
The ghost-like city, steeple studded,
Slumbering grey in a mist of green.

Or listen while the throstle sings
Night's requiem, where, yet adding rings,
Millennial oaks bemock the aloe,
That once a century skyward springs.

Or follow, still by fancy led,
Where bells are ringing overhead;
Bells with their ceaseless chime in Oxford,
Voices to warn from the peaceful dead.

Or wander down an ancient street
Where mingling ages quaintly meet,
Pillar and pediment, dome and gable,
Mellowed by time to a picture sweet.

Or sit where saints have sate, and feel
Their calm across our spirits steal,
Their singleness, their depth of purpose;
Our lives seem shallower as we kneel.

Or stand in many a noble hall,
Where England's greatest deck the wall,
  Prelate and statesman, prince and poet ;
Who hath an ear let him hear their call !

Or pace, remote from noisier throng,
Some shadowy corridor along,
  And tread on tombs and waken echoes,
That bid the living be true and strong,

Or take the oar and down the stream,
Silently floating like a dream,
  People the wave with phantom races,
And hear the shout for the victor-team !

Thoughts of a past, a happier time,
When selfish aim seemed public crime,
  And feel once more the pulses quicken
With generous heat of a genial prime.

Then, back returning, seek once more
The Babel city, the wordy war ;
  Perchance a drooping cause to hearten,
Perchance its wavering ranks restore.

For still, though doubtful seems the fray,
And long the struggle and hard the way,
  Yet lawless passion is self-destroying,
And coolness, courage shall win the day.

ARTHUR GRAY BUTLER (1886).

From "The Choice of Achilles and other Poems."

OXFORD

O HOLY land to which I longed to go,
Long, long ago!
On Israel's stony mountains there to trace
The prints of Grace;
From Hebron's starting-point each rock to see
Where holy footsteps trod and bled for me,
On to the shades of dark Gethsemane,
And darker Golgotha—
I could not go;
Visions there are of mingled joy and woe,
That haunt our dreams, unrealised below,
Yet oft I think amid these sacred walls,
And solemn calls—
These airy pinnacles entranced in light,
These bells that warn of Time's eternal flight
These moonlit, soul-lit, high ascended spires,
That take first morning-rays, eve's latest fires—
May there not be
For such as me
Places of memory, hallowed, old, divine,
Where one may ope a door and find a shrine,
Or climb a tower and see an Eden shine?
Places of beauty so unearthly fair,
That, best-beloved, our Holy Land is there,
Mid our own people? There in mist and rime,
And tenderest fancy, mystic veil of time;
There in the home of saints, whose old-world fire
Lives on to light and kindle new desire,
While still expanding truth new vesture wears,
Fresh revelations with advance of years;

There, where we hear the highest, holiest call,
There is the land most holy, after all.

ARTHUR GRAY BUTLER.

From "The Choice of Achilles and other Poems."

A GREY MORE REVEREND

A FAINTER loveliness than theirs * is thine,
Bred of an English May and melting air;
A livelier green, a growth more tender line
Low hill and meadow deep. Thy worn walls bear
A grey more reverend. More demurely fair
Thy cloistered meaning feels a skiey gleam
Colder. Thy mystic skirts of beauty wear
More liquid lucent many a folded stream,
A softer rose and mist draw down thy twilight dream.

So potent, pure thy charm, not Corydon
Could from the magic web romantical,
Woven with afterglow of mystery gone,
By moonlit fancy and by mouldering wall,
By painted twilight in that haunting hall,
Free all his fancy. Half the lingering gleam
He felt, and breath of grey enchantment fall
From brooding tower on his clear spirit's stream,
And draw its mirror back to mingle with the dream.

REGINALD FANSHAWE.

From "Corydon : An Elegy." Stanzas XLIV and LXV.

* *I.e.*, Rome, Athens, Florence.

OXFORD FROM THE CHERWELL

O MANY an evening have I been
Entranced upon that glorious scene,
When silent thought hath proved too strong
For utterance in tranquil song.
There intermingling with the trees
The city rose in terraces
Of radiant buildings, backed with towers
And dusky folds of elm-tree bowers.
St. Mary's watchmen, mute and old,
Each rooted to a buttress bold,
From out their lofty niche looked down
Upon the calm monastic town,
Upon the single glistering dome,
And princely Wykeham's convent home,
And the twin minarets that spring
Like buoyant arrows taking wing,
And square in Moorish fashion wrought
As though from old Granada brought,
And that famed street, whose goodly show
In double crescent lies below,
And Bodley's court and chestnut bower
That overhangs the garden wall,
And sheds all day white flakes of flower
From off its quiet coronal.
Methinks I see it at this hour,
How silently the blossoms fall.

F. W. Faber.

From "The Cherwell."

THE SPIRIT OF OXFORD

SOME say thy loveliness is but a tomb
Of ancient loyalties and faith long dead ;
Thy spirit but a faded hour's perfume,
Haunting a shadowy home untenanted ;
Thy heart a harbourage for barks that fled
The freshening wind of change ; thy youth a play
Unpregnant years of pleasant dream, unread ;
Unripe thy age ; thy beauty reverend, grey,
But with a life outgrown, a look of calm decay.

Though such a thing thou wert, so shadowy, yet
There is a loveliness as dear in death,
There is a grace which blossoms on regret,
A praise for things unpassing, yea a wreath
Immortal for old sweetness saved, a breath
Of benediction, that by life's decease
Love waits embalming, seeking here, beneath
These thy calm hospitalities, new leave
From time's rough trespass free, for liberties of peace.

Such know but half thy seeming, but the husk
Of agelong, liberal growth, the residue
Of thy full spirit. For that dreaming dusk
Lingers an interlude of dawn more true.
Yea in thy youth is living power to mew
Plumage outworn ; and thou dost yearly preen
Wings for a wider freedom, and ensue
Ripe flight to richer fields of freshening green,
And winds of broadening breath and seasons far, unseen.

These thy grey cloisters caught the first faint gleam
On slumbering knowledge, from the fire renewed

Of ancient lips ; that old Franciscan's dream,
Nature by patient magic calmly wooed
To coy unveiling ; felt a nobler mood
Waken in Wyclif unto liberal glow
And larger dawn of distant brotherhood ;
Heard of this English the first lispings low,
Rough-shapen for the Spirit's grave and spacious flow.

These felt the freshening wind of living Greece
Ripely unseal from wisdom's twilight womb
Warm wakening life's humanities ; release
From barren ban free nature ; blend, relume
Things ancient new ; these saw the liberal bloom,
What time the pure flower of an ancient trust
And breathing truth, resurgent from the tomb,
Outgrew the secular shadow and the dust,
The immemorial burden of that Rome august.

Here, when high dreaming's pure essential source,
In each long summer age of soulless drought,
Runs low and shrunken, some prophetic force
Wells from the spirit deep, and floodeth out
Fruitful. When barren winds of wintry doubt
Blow withering, listless round a languid earth,
Ever spring visions of a faith devout
Fall dewy softening on the face of dearth,
Breathing new passion's hope and potency of birth.

So meet and mingle here all ages ; youth
Swayed by the motion of the flowing hour :
The calm procession of slow-seasoning truth ;
Grey walls that whisper ancientry of power ;
Wild thoughts adrift which pluck a withering flower ;

Old faiths that cling and loiter in the shade ;
Unvital, surface dreams by bridge and tower ;
Light eddies swirling back dead things decayed ;
Deep eddies curving down, unfretful, undelayed.

Here seated, where two currents calmly blent
Move, one full widening water, new and old,
Now in ripe season of enfranchisement,
Bared to all breathing influence, thou dost mould
Life's liberal motion ; here shalt see unfold ;
Whole human growth, that feels an ancient root,
By time's true spirit quickened and controlled,
And the magic of a broadening light transmute
To full and golden faith her summer's perfect fruit.

REGINALD FANSHAWE.

From "Corydon : An Elegy." Stanzas LV-LX

OXFORD

UPON a hill I stood, and far below
Lay the loved city in a silver haze :
Mine eyes were quick with tears : she lay so fair,
So passionless, so sad.
'Twas here our fathers
Drained the waste fen, and with prophetic eyes
Divined a refuge for the soul, and planned
A green oasis severed from the waste,
Where each, in cloistered calm and leisured shade,
Might learn of wisdom in the lap of peace.
Slowly she grew in unobtrusive grace
Generous in bounty as in beauty first :
As showers, as showers of scarlet leaves in autumn,
The generations scatter : she remains
Like Niobe, surviving all her sons :—
Shield me, O Mother ! For, even while I gaze,
I feel the arrow of Apollo's fire.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE

ODE FOR MUSIC

BUT in this princely land of all that's good and great
Would Clio seek the most distinguished seat,
Most blest, where all is so sublimely blest,
That with superior grace o'erlooks the rest,
Like a rich gem in circling gold enshrined,
Where Isis' waters wind
Along the sweetest shore,
That ever felt fair Culture's hands,
Or Spring's embroidered mantle wore,
Lo! where majestic Oxford stands;
Virtue's awful throne!
Wisdom's immortal source!
Thee well her best belov'd may boasting Albion own,
Whence each fair purpose of ingenuous praise,
All that in thought or deed divine is deemed,
In one unbounded tide, one unremitted course,
From age to age has still successive streamed;
Where Learning and where Liberty have nursed,
For those that in their ranks have shone the first
Their most luxuriant growth of ever-blooming bays.
And now she lifts her head sublime,
Majestic in the moss of time;
Nor wants there Græcia's better part
'Mid the proud piles of ancient art,
Whose fretted spires, with ruder hand,
Wainfleet and Wickham bravely planned;
Nor decent Doric to dispense
New charms 'mid old magnificence;
And here and there soft Corinth weaves
Her daedal coronet of leaves;

While as with rival pride their towers invade the sky,
Radcliffe and Bodley seem to vie,
Which shall deserve the foremost place,
Or gothic strength or attic grace.

THOMAS WARTON (Trinity College, 1751).
Professor of Poetry.

FROM "AN ODE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD"

WITH vain ambition round the world I roul,
In vain I travel far
From Pole to Pole,
To seek where Riches and Preferments are ;
In vain I after Honours go :
Alas ! too well I know,
Those Heavens are shut, there is no entrance there
Till I'm a member made by being baptized here.
If in this Styx I might but dipped be,
I should from dangerous Ignorance be free,
And share of Immortality.
But now the world refuses me ; among the Crowd
I cannot be allowed ;
Like mettal when the coin is base
They will not let me pass.
Had I your Stamp, might I be Capped and Gowned,
I then might pass the Universe around.

JOHN WHITEHALL (1685).

OXFORD THE BLEST ABODE

WHERE shall I first the beauteous scene disclose,
And all the gay variety expose ?
For wheresoe'er I turn my wondering eyes
Aspiring towers and verdant groves arise ;
Immortal greens the smiling plains array
And mazy rivers murmur all the way.

Aloft in state the airy towers arise,
And with new lustre deck the wondering skies.
Lo ! to what height the Schools ascending reach,
Built with that art which they alone can teach ;
The lofty dome expands her spacious gate,
Where all the decent Graces jointly wait ;
In every shape the god of Art resorts
And crowds of sages fill the extended courts.

Here colleges in sweet confusion rise,
There temples seem to reach their native skies ;
Spires, towers and groves compose the various show,
And mingled prospects charm the doubting view.
See how the matchless youth their hours improve
And in the glorious way to knowledge move !
Eager for fame, prevent the rising sun,
And watch the midnight labours of the moon.
Not tender years their bold attempts restrain
Who leave dull time and hasten into men ;
Pure to the soul and pleasing to the eyes,
Like angels youthful and like angels wise.

O pleasing shades ! O ever green retreats !
Ye learned grottos and ye sacred seats !

Never may you politer arts refuse,
But entertain in peace the bashful Muse !
So may you be kind Heaven's distinguished care,
And may your fame be lasting as 'tis fair !
Let greater bards on famed Parnassus dream,
Or taste th' inspiring Heliconian stream,
Yet whilst our Oxford is the blest abode
Of every muse and every tuneful god,
Parnassus owns its honours far outdone,
And Isis boasts more bards than Helicon.

T. Tickell (Queen's College).

From a poem inscribed to Lord Lonsdale, 1707.

HAIL, OXFORD, HAIL!

YE fretted pinnacles, ye fanes sublime,
Ye towers that wear the mossy vest of time;
Ye massy piles of old munificence,
At once the pride of learning and defence;
Ye cloisters pale that, lengthening to the sight,
To contemplation, step by step, invite;
Ye high-arched walks, where oft the whispers clear
Of harps unseen have swept the poet's ear;
Ye temples dim, where pious duty pays
Her holy hymns of ever-echoing praise;
Lo! your lov'd Isis, from the bordering vale,
With all a mother's fondness bids you hail!
Hail, Oxford, hail! of all that's good and great,
Of all that's fair, the guardian and the seat;
Nurse of each brave pursuit, each generous aim
By truth exalted to the throne of fame!
Like Greece in science and in liberty,
As Athens learn'd, as Lacedæmon free.
All who to Albion gave the arts of peace
And best the labours plann'd of letter'd ease;
Who taught with truth, or with persuasion moved;
Who soothed with numbers, or with sense improved;
Who ranged the powers of reason or refined
All that adorned or humanised the mind;
Each priest of health, that mixed the balmy bowl,
To rear frail man, and stay the fleeting soul,
All crowd around, and echoing to the sky
"Hail, Oxford, hail!" with filial transport cry.

From T. WARTON'S "*Triumph of Isis.*"

ON A VIEW OF OXFORD

OXFORD, all hail, delightful seat !
Where nature, drest by art, bestows
Her every charm to make thee great
And aid contemplative repose.

Without thy walls the landscape spreads
In living green and towering shades ;
Isis, slow winding thro' the meads,
Darts a broad splendour o'er the glades.

Safe on thy mansions Silence dwells,
Nor cares, nor crowds his pleasure wound ;
Sweet walks surround the studious cells
With bowers and blooming odours crowned.

In ranks unnumbered round the rooms,
See Science all her treasures spread,
And dignify the swelling domes
With marble honours of the dead.

Hoary Antiquity displays
Her rolls inscribed with curious care,
History unwinds time's gloomy maze,
And shews ten thousand wonders there.

Astronomy now turns her globe,
Now through her tube triumphant soars,
Expatiates o'er heaven's azure robe
And every burning gem explores.

Here Poetry expands her page,
The Theban swells th' unbounded song;
Fired with the same extatic rage,
Towers the stupendous Muse of Young.

Divinity's meridian ray
From Scripture's spotless mirror gleams;
Fathers, Reformers, drink the day
And students bless th' immortal beams.

How sweet in these serene retreats
With these companions to beguile
The day, and then in blooming seats
Or painted meadows breathe from toil!

How would the mind her freedom feel,
Enlarge her intellectual store,
And, towering with seraphic zeal,
To heaven's eternal visions soar!

Rapt with the scenes of endless day,
Hope would anticipate the bliss—
My soul from tumult turns away
And sighs for such a life as this.

MUSÆUS.

In the "Gentleman's Magazine," Aug. 1752.

OXFORD BY MOONLIGHT

THERE is a magic in the moonlit hour
Which day hath never in his deepest power
Of light and bloom, when bird and bee resound
And new-born flowers imparadise the ground!
And ne'er hath city, since a moon began
To hallow nature for the soul of man,
Steeped in the freshness of her fairy light,
More richly shone, than Oxford shines to-night!
No lines of harshness on her temples frown,
But all in one soft magic melted down;
Sublimer grown, through mellow air they rise,
And seem with vaster swell to awe the skies!
On archèd windows how intensely gleams
The glassy whiteness of reflected beams!
Whose radiant slumber on the marble tomb
Of mitred founders, in funereal gloom,
Extends, or else in pallid shyness falls
On gothic casements, or collegiate walls.

ROBERT MONTGOMERY (Lincoln College).

807–55

From "Oxford."

A FIRST VIEW OF OXFORD

BRIGHT streams the morn, the long-remembered morn
Which sees the young aspirant quit with scorn
His humble hamlet, querulous to roam,
And gilds the spire of Learning's central home.
Can language sound the depth of his delight,
As sinks the city on his aching sight?
No orient gems her mural crown enchase,
No pearls ennoble her retiring grace;
Not robed with novel tire, as youthful bride
Conscious of charms, and arching into pride,
But like an ancient, feeling all her state,
With calm pontific majesty sedate.
How bounds his step along her "sacred way,"
Triumphal, whose magnificent array
Of sinuous beauty and superb repose,
Knows no superior, scarce a rival knows;
Where toils successful Cynthia's cestus blend
And new perspectives grace each skilful bend;
Perspective wont in fairy land to lie,
And bless with transient glimpse the painter's eye,
Which Fear, in all its boyishness, pourtrayed
An ebon outline of appalling shade;
What spells arrest, and fascinate the sight,
Blending Corinthian grace with Doric might;
Each footstep ushers in a gorgeous scene,
Art's choicest raptures belt by gushing green,
With skill which seems too natural for Art,
"In this," she cries, "my cunning had no part,"
But proudly points, as model of her power,
To where reposes Wolsey's stately tower.

WILLIAM C. TOWNSEND (Queen's College, 1826).

From "The Pæan of Oxford."

ENTRANCE TO OXFORD FROM THE LONDON ROAD

Drawn by F. NASH *and engraved by* F. C. LEWIS

From Ackerman's "Oxford," 1814

To face p. 44

ALMA MATER

NOW, undisturbed, he took his way
And travelled till the close of day ;
When, to delight his wearied eyes,
Before him Oxford's towers arise.
"O, Alma Mater ! " Syntax cried,
" My present boast, my early pride ;
To whose protecting care I owe
All I've forgot and all I know.
Deign from your nursling to receive
The homage that his heart can give.
Hail ! sacred, ever-honoured shades
Where oft I woo'd th' immortal maids ;
Where, strolling oft, at break of day,
My feet have brushed the dews away !
By Isis and by Cherwell's stream,
How oft I wove the classic dream,
Or sought the cloisters dim, to meet
Pale Science in her lone retreat !
The sight of you again inspires
My bosom with its former fires ;
I feel again the genial flow
That makes me half forget the woe,
And all my aching heart could tell
Since last I bade these scenes farewell."

WM. COMBE.

1741–1823.

From " Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque."
(Canto VI.)

SALVE, MAGNA PARENS

O Oxford! let delivered Britain know
From thy famed seats her several blessings flow.
The accoutred barons and assisting knights
In thee prepared for council or for fights,
Planned and obtained her civil liberty;
Truth found her fearless witnesses in thee;
When, tried as gold, saints from thy tottering pyres
Rose up to heaven, Elijah-like, in fires!
Peace to thy walls! and honour to thy name!
May age to age record thy gathering fame!
While thy still favoured seats pour forth their youth,
Brave advocates of liberty and truth!
In fair succession rise to bless the realm!
Fathers in church, and statesmen at the helm.

ANONYMOUS.

THE SOUL OF OXFORD

SOUL of the City that I love the best,
Upon whose gracious breast
Suckled I drank the wisdom of all years
That mellowed under glory of Greek skies ;
And gray philosophies
So dimly cradled in our colder West.
Pale blossom of high travail, soft as tears,
Thy memory burns in me like wine and brings
Passion of golden strings
And all that statelier beauty, with the grace
Of mediæval magic carved in stone,
To be young Learning's throne;
And marry Plato's pleasant murmurings
To modern life, as heaven and earth embrace.
Thy music haunts me, in that cloistered dust,
With a great human trust.

I hear the tramp of multitudinous feet,
As on thy storied street
Flows like the stream of Time itself and bears
Burden of fears and laughter, life and death,
And love's immortal breath ;
Dim tragedies, that now give up their sweet
Alone as jewels, that an Empire wears.
But which is Truth, and which the lower sky
Of sainted legendry,
With rest grown conscious into rapture calm,
I cannot say where all is haloed round
And all is holy ground ;
While, with white steps that bridge eternity,
Church tower or spire goes up a solemn psalm.

Porches and pillared fronts arise, and gleam
Like an embodied dream.

Thy doors and windows to earth open not
Each aureoled space or spot,
But into heaven itself and ripe repose
Unhonoured by our stretches of dark strife ;
Roses of larger life,
Not blurred by our unbeauteous labour's blot,
In petals pure as virgin breasts unclose.
As the great sea runs into every nook
And creek's sequestered crook,
Filling each curve and corner with its flood,
So thy fond spirit flows into my veins,
The chastity that reigns
In reverend lines and many a mystic look,
And flushes all the estuaries of my blood.
Great shining shadows are around me curl'd,
The old and fairer world.

F. W. Orde Ward.

IN PRAISE OF OXFORD

TUO recogito me pastum ubere,
Ibique suxeram lac primum litterae,
Qua propter teneor tibi rependere
Si laudis quippiam scirem exprimere.
Tu firma moeniis, arvis irrigua,
Pratis pulcherrimis mire melliflua,
Fecunda frugibus, quaeque placentia
Ministras civibus in summa copia.
Mater militiae cum apta fueris,
Ut turres indicant adjunctae moeniis,
Tamen perfectius dotata diceris
Minervae munere, donoque Palladis.
Plus tibi contulit magna scientia
Quam unquam fecerit armorum copia.
Beata diceris per orbis climata,
Sed quia singulis solvis aenigmata.
Grandaeva siquidem mater in filiis
Prae cunctis urbibus gaudere poteris,
Cum plene cogites, quot proles parturis,
Quae mundum repleant doctrinae rivulis.
Si te prioribus villis jam comparem,
Athenas Cecropis fatebor sterilem,
Et Achademiam urbem inutilem
Quae quondam dederat doctrinam uberem.
Pallebit livida domus Romulea,
Impar putabitur ejus scientia,
Quamquam plus vicerit artis peritia
Quam armis fecerit vel quam potentia.
Quod Plato dixerit, successor Socratis,
Quod Aristoteles, hujus discipulus,
Quod quisque sentiat peripateticus,
Tu recte judicans docendo discutis,

Non Anaxagorae chaos quod posuit,
Nec lis Empedoclis, qua mundum efficit,
Sed nec Demetrii, quem verum latuit
Te latent Attomi, quos errans cecinit.
Non te Virgilii compta mendacia,
Nec docti Senecae latent proverbia,
Sed nec Ovidii te fallunt carmina,
Quae fecit veneris arte praeludia.
Quidcunque pinxerant poetae garruli,
Quicquid discusserant veri philosophi,
Quod magnum dixerant veri theologi,
Ad instar exprimis solaris radii.
Antiqua respuens, ut dicam proprius,
Quicquid ediderit pulchra Parisius,
Ut verum fatear, informas melius,
Licet haec opera distendat lacius.
In te geritur quicquid scienciae
Vel artis quaeritur cum gracia, theoricae
Discaris thalamus, platea practicae,
Et cunctae merito fons sapienciae.
Olim innotuit inter proverbia,
Regnorum sicuti narrat historia,
Quod quis interrogat, quærat in Abela,
Ubi tunc forsitan florebant studia.
Nunc proculdubio si quicquam quaeritur,
Cujusque racio non clare cernitur,
Mater Oxonia quaesita loquitur
Quicquid in dubiis latens ambigitur.

From TRYVYTLAM'S "*De laude Oxoniae.*"
About the reign of Henry VI.

QUANDO ego te rursum satiata mente videbo
Augustosque legam vicos, quae fata secutus
Rursus in Oxonium regali tramite tendam ?
Et Shotoverini longe de culmine montis
Aspiciam laetas ex imo assurgere turres ?
Teque adeo, viridi reginam in valle sedentem
Cæruleâ cultos redimitam nube capillos ?
Salve sancta, potens virtutum, operosa benignis
Artibus et studiis nutrix non tetrica alendis,
Gentis honor. Tuque ante alias, venerabilis aedes,
Aeternum decus, et Christi de nomine notum,
Aula ingens, tectisque altum, temploque superbum.
Quam centum astantes circa plena ubera nati,
Attonitam cingunt matrem, Phoeboque litantes.
Omnes laurigeri, velati laudibus omnes,
Musarumque chorus lectus, quos ultimus inter
Ipse sequens venio et retro comitatus anhelo.

* * * *

Jam quid ego hic referam cunctos ex ordine pagos,
Binsaeumque, Hincenque, et adhuc Medleia tecta,
Vel placidi Witami sedes. Cur te celebrarem
Gazentona, tuasve Enshamia terra ruinis,
Et templum antiquum, semperque nitentia culta ?
Aut Wulwercutium, aut molli quae consita clivo
Blenchintona suis tumidum caput exserit ulmis.
Sed neque depingam Portensia prata canendo,
Nec te camporum pinguissime, nec tua tangam
Pascua, nec tonsas armento praepete ripas.
Nulla meas meruit vel Kidlingtonia musas,
Northamptonensem vel quae via ducit in urbem.

F. VERNON (Christ Church).

From "Oxonium: Poema," 1667.

AD INCLYTAM ACADEMIAM OXONIENSEM

OXONIUM, o nimium felix, tua si bona noris,
Splendida dona Deûm ;
In te namque habitant Pallas, Charites et Apollo
Pieridesque novem.
O juvenes ! studiis alacres incumbite sanctis ;
Mobile tempus abit ;
Mobile tempus abit ; certe est Occasio calva :
Prendite dum liceat.

JOHN PANKHURST (1573).

OXFORD UNIVERSITY TO A STUDENT

QUAMVIS experior omnem progeniem,
Fili, plus vereor Anglorum speciem ;
Dat locus etiam summam temperiem,
Hic ergo capiam aeternam requiem.

ANONYMOUS, *circa* 1350.

OXFORD IN RETROSPECT

Though absent, yet I cannot choose but love.

CLEMENT BARKSDALE (1609–87)

Go to the learned Universities,
And tell the schollers of the loss of time;
Bid them beware of too much liberties,
Best thriving plants are tended in their prime;
And bid them first goe read the rules of grace,
That lower blessings may come on apace.

NICHOLAS BRETON

THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY

GO, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill;
Go, Shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes:
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropp'd grasses shoot another head.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd green;
Come, Shepherd, and again renew the quest.

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruise,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use;
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screen'd in this nook o'er the high, half-reap'd field,
And here till sun-down, Shepherd, will I be.
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep:
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfum'd showers
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers:

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again,
The story of that Oxford scholar poor
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at Preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the Gipsy lore,
And roam'd the world with that wild brotherhood,
And came, as most men deem'd, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars whom at college erst he knew
Met him, and of his way of life inquired.
Whereat he answer'd, that the Gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will:
"And I," he said, "the secret of their art,
When fully learn'd, will to the world impart:
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill."

This said, he left them, and return'd no more,
But rumours hung about the country side
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey,
The same the Gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring:
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle bench, the smock-frock'd boors
Had found him seated at their entering,

But, mid their drink and clatter, he would fly
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, Wanderer, on thy trace ;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast pass'd their quiet place :
Or in my boat I lie
Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer heats,
Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumnor hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground.
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the slow punt swings round :
And leaning backwards in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream.

And then they land, and thou art seen no more.
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leaf'd, white anemone—
Dark bluebells drench'd with dews of summer eves—
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none has words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass
Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the glittering Thames,
To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass,
Have often pass'd thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown :
Mark'd thy outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air ;
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert gone.

At some lone homestead in the Cumnor hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range the slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee watching, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine :
And mark'd thee, when the stars come out and shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In Autumn, on the skirts of Bagley wood,
Where most the Gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of grey,
Above the forest ground call'd Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all ;
So often has he known thee past him stray
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd spray,
And waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

OXFORD FROM THE ABINGDON ROAD

Drawn by J. M. W. TURNER *and engraved by* JOHN PYE

To face p. 60

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go
Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face towards Hinksey and its wintry ridge ?
And thou hast climb'd the hill
And gain'd the white brow of the Cumnor range,
Turn'd once to watch, while thick the snowflakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequester'd grange.

But what—I dream ! Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wander'd from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a Gipsy tribe :
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid ;
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave—
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

—No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours.
For what wears out the life of mortal men ?
'Tis that from change to change their being rolls :
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers.
Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.

Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire:
Else wert thou long since number'd with the dead—
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire.
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou hadst—what we, alas, have not!

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other things;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been baffled, brings.
O Life unlike to ours!
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
And each half lives a hundred different lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from Heaven: and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd;
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
Ah, do not we, Wanderer, await it too?

Yes, we await it, but it still delays,
And then we suffer ; and amongst us One,
Who most has suffer'd, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne ;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days ;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head.
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest : and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear
With close-lipp'd Patience for our only friend,
Sad Patience, too near neighbour to Despair :
But none has hope like thine.
Thou through the fields and through the woods dost stray,
Roaming the country side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames ;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts, was rife—
Fly hence, our contact fear !
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood !
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude.

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silver'd branches of the glade—
Far on the forest skirts, where none pursue
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales.

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd thy powers,
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made:
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles!
—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow
Among the Aegean isles:
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
Green bursting figs, and tunnies steep'd in brine;
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

The young light-hearted Masters of the waves;
And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out more sail,
And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the Western Straits, and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

MATTHEW ARNOLD (Balliol College).
1822–88.

THYRSIS: A MONODY, TO COMMEMORATE THE AUTHOR'S FRIEND, ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, WHO DIED AT FLORENCE, 1861

HOW changed is here each spot man makes or fills!
In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the same;
The village street its haunted mansion lacks,
And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,
And from the roofs the twisted chimney stalks—
Are ye, too, changed, ye hills!
See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men
To-night from Oxford up your pathway strays!
Here came I often, often in old days—
Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis then.

Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth Farm,
Past the high wood, to where the elm-tree crowns
The hills behind whose ridge the sunset flames?
The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,
The Vale, the three lone weirs, the youthful Thames?—
This winter-eve is warm.
Humid the air! leafless, yet soft as spring,
The tender purple spray on copse and briers!
And that sweet city with her dreaming spires,
She needs not June for beauty's heightening,

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-night!—
Only, methinks, some loss of habit's power
Befalls me wandering through this upland dim.
Once passed I blindfold here at any hour;
Now seldom come I, since I came with him.
That single elm-tree bright
Against the west—I miss it! is it gone?

We prized it dearly ; while it stood, we said,
Our friend, the Gipsy Scholar, was not dead ;
While the tree lived, he in these fields lived on.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here,
But once I knew each field, each flower, each stick ;
And with the country-folk acquaintance made—
By barn, in threshing-time, by new-built rick.
Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we first assay'd.
Ah me ! this many a year
My pipe is lost, my shepherd's holiday !
Needs must I lose them, needs with heavy heart
Into the world and wave of men depart ;
But Thyrsis of his own will went away.

It irk'd him to be here, he could not rest.
He loved each simple joy the country yields,
He loved his mates ; but yet he could not keep,
For that a shadow lower'd on the fields,
Here with the shepherds and the silly sheep.
Some life of men unblest
He knew, which made him droop, and filled his head.
He went : his piping took a troubled sound
Of storms that rage outside our happy ground ;
He could not wait their passing, he is dead.

So, some tempestuous morn in early June,
When the year's primal burst of bloom is o'er,
Before the roses and the longest day—
When garden-walks and all the grassy floor
With blossoms red and white of fallen May
And chestnut flowers are strewn—
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,

From the wet field, through the vext garden-trees,
Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze :—
The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I !

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go ?
Soon will the high Midsummer pomps come on,
Soon will the musk carnations break and swell,
Soon shall we have gold-dusted snapdragon,
Sweet-William with his homely cottage-smell,
And stocks in fragrant blow ;
Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
And open jasmine-muffled lattices,
And groups under the dreaming garden-trees,
And the full moon, and the white evening-star.

He hearkens not ! light comer, he is flown !
What matters it ? next year he will return,
And we shall have him in the sweet spring-days,
With whitening hedges, and uncrumpling fern,
And blue-bells trembling by the forest ways,
And scent of hay new mown.
But Thyrsis nevermore we swains shall see ;
See him come back and cut a smoother reed,
And blow a strain the world at last shall heed—
For Time, not Corydon, hath conquered thee !

Alack, for Corydon no rival now !—
But when Sicilian shepherds lost a mate,
Some good survivor with his flute would go,
Piping a ditty sad for Bion's fate ;
And cross the unpermitted ferry's flow,
And relax Pluto's brow,
And make leap up with joy the beauteous head

Of Proserpine, among whose crowned hair
Are flowers first opened on Sicilian air,
And flute his friend, like Orpheus, from the dead.

O easy access to the hearer's grace
When Dorian shepherds sang to Proserpine,
For she herself had trod Sicilian fields,
She knew the Dorian water's gush divine,
She knew each lily white which Enna yields,
Each rose with blushing face;
She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian strain,
But ah! of our poor Thames she never heard;
Her foot the Cumnor cowslips never stirred;
And we should tease her with our plaint in vain.

Well, wind-dispersed and vain the words will be,
Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour
In the old haunt, and find our tree-topped hill.
Who, if not I, for questing here hath power?
I know the wood which hides the daffodil,
I know the Fyfield tree,
I know what white, what purple fritillaries
The grassy harvest of the river-fields
Above by Eynsham, down by Sandford, yields,
And what sedged brooks are Thames' tributaries.

I know these slopes; who knows them if not I?—
But many a dingle on the loved hill-side,
With thorns once studded, old, white-blossomed trees,
Where thick the cowslips grew, and far descried
High towered the spikes of purple orchises,
Hath since our day put by
The coronals of that forgotten time;

Down each green bank hath gone the plough-boy's
team,
And only in the hidden brookside gleam
Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime.

Where is the girl, who by the boatman's door,
Above the locks, above the boating throng,
Unmoored our skiff when through the Wytham flats,
Red loosestrife and blond meadow-sweet among,
And darting swallows and light water-gnats,
We tracked the shy Thames-shore?
Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny swell
Of our boat passing heaved the river grass,
Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass?
They are all gone and thou art gone as well!

Yes, thou art gone! and round me too the night
In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.
I see her veil draw soft across the day,
I feel her slowly chilling breath invade
The cheek grown thin, the brown hair sprent with
grey;
I feel her finger light
Laid pausefully upon life's headlong train;—
The foot less prompt to meet the morning dew,
The heart less bounding at emotion new,
And hope, once crushed, less quick to spring again.

And long the way appears, which seemed so short
To the less practised eye of sanguine youth;
And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy air,
The mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth,

Tops in life's morning sun so bright and bare!
Unbreachable the fort
Of the long-battered world uplifts its wall;
And strange and vain the earthly turmoil grows,
And near and real the charm of thy repose,
And night as welcome as a friend would fall.

But hush! the upland hath a sudden loss
Of quiet!—Look, adown the dusk hillside,
A troop of Oxford hunters going home,
As in old days, jovial and talking, ride!
From hunting with the Berkshire hounds they come.
Quick! let me fly and cross
Into yon further field!—'Tis done; and see,
Backed by the sunset, which doth glorify
The orange and pale violet evening sky,
Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree! the Tree!

I take the omen! Eve lets down her veil,
The white fog creeps from bush to bush about,
The west unflushes, the high stars grow bright,
And in the scattered farms the lights come out;
I cannot reach the signal-tree to night,
Yet, happy omen, hail!
Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-vale
(For there thy earth-forgetting eyelids sleep
The morningless and unawakening sleep
Under the flowery oleanders pale),

Hear it, O Thyrsis, still our tree is there!—
Ah, vain! These English fields, this upland dim,
These brambles pale with mist engarlanded,
That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not for him;

To a boon southern country he is fled,
And now in happier air,
Wandering with the great Mother's train divine
(And purer or more subtle soul than thee,
I trow, the mighty Mother doth not see)
Within a folding of the Apennine,

Thou hearest the immortal chants of old !—
Putting his sickle to the perilous grain
In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian king,
For thee the Lityerses-song again
Young Daphnis with his silver voice doth sing;
Sings his Sicilian fold,
His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded eyes—
And how a call celestial round him rang,
And heavenward from the fountain-brink he sprang,
And all the marvel of the golden skies.

There thou art gone, and me thou leavest here
Sole in these fields ! yet will I not despair.
Despair I will not, while I yet descry
Under mild canopy of English air
That lonely tree against the western sky.
Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear
Our Gipsy-Scholar haunts, outliving thee !
Fields where soft sheep from cages pull the hay,
Woods with anemones in flower till May,
Know him a wanderer still ; then why not me ?

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,
Shy to illumine ; and I seek it too.
This does not come with houses or with gold,
With place, with honour, and a flattering crew ;

'Tis not in the world's market bought and sold—
But the smooth-slipping weeks
Drop by and leave its seeker still untired ;
Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,
He wends unfollowed, he must house alone ;
Yet on he fares, by his own heart inspired.

Thou too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wast bound !
Thou wanderedst with me for a little hour !
Men gave thee nothing ; but this happy quest,
If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee power,
If men procured thee trouble, gave thee rest.
And this rude Cumnor ground,
Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet fields,
Here camest thou in thy jocund youthful time,
Here was thine height of strength, thy golden prime !
And still the haunt beloved a virtue yields.

What though the music of thy rustic flute
Kept not for long its happy country tone ;
Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy note
Of men contention-tost, of men who groan,
Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired thy throat—
It failed and thou wast mute !
Yet hadst thou alway visions of our light,
And long with men of care thou couldst not stay,
And soon thy foot resumed its wandering way,
Left human haunt, and on alone till night.

Too rare, too rare grow now my visits here!
Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of yore,

Thyrsis, in reach of sheep-bells is my home.
—Then through the great town's harsh heart-wearying
roar
Let in thy voice a whisper often come
To chase fatigue and fear :—
Why faintest thou? I wandered till I died.
Roam on! The light we sought is shining still.
Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet crowns the hill,
Our Scholar travels yet the loved hillside.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

OXFORD FROM OSNEY BRIDGE

From a Water-colour drawing by P. DE WINT *in the University Galleries*

To face p. 74

A QUIET QUEEN

OH, well might memory leave her shepherd here,
Where in rich vision's cup do widely brim,
On such a day, so calm, divinely clear,
Liquid infinities, from Cotswold dim
To down and Chiltern, one unbroken rim,
Save where the wooded slope of Cumnor Hurst
Cuts the full circle. Better none could limn
Than Corydon such loveliness as nursed
His nature's youth and cooled his clambering spirit's thirst.

Or following down his steps to Chilswell farm,
By quarry and by dingle, sit or stray,
Where Oxford putteth on her perfect charm,
One central sanctuary of sunlit grey,
Holden undesecrate, by birchen spray
And shortening slope, she sits a quiet queen,
Keeping her pastoral court's sweet country sway ;
Or violet crowned, in shadow's lovelier sheen,
More gracious, fresh she flowers from lap of woodland green.

Or there, betwixt the wild rose and the oak,
Where, from the cloistered coppice, as a nun,
Out in the breathing free world shyly broke
That twilight lane ; where billowing in the sun
The barley dips ; where footless shadows run
Down hedge and hill ; and lo, dome, towers and spire

Flashed as a spirit city softly spun
Of fancy's fabric, blanched with a ghostly fire,
Against the woodland blue, a faint enchanted choir.

REGINALD FANSHAWE.

From "Corydon: An Elegy."
Stanzas CCIX–XI.

TO AN UNKNOWN POET *

DEAR friend, who, two long centuries ago,
Didst tread where since my grandsires trod,
Along thy devious Usk's untroubled flow,
Breathing thy soul to God.

I seek, I, born in these our later days,
Using the measure thou didst love,
With halting tribute of too tardy praise,
A poet throned above.

I in the self-same venerable halls
And gray quadrangles made my home,
Which heard, new-built, within their recent walls,
Thy youthful footsteps come.

A little grayer now and stiller grown,
The tranquil refuge now, as then,
Where our dear country glories in her own,
Apart from alien men.

There, on thy musings broke the painful sound
Of arms; the long-plumed cavaliers
Clanged through the courts—the low fat fields around
Were filled with strife and tears.

Constrained by promptings of thy ancient race,
Thy gown and books thou flungst away,
To meet the sturdy Roundhead face to face
On many a hard-fought day,

Till thy soft soul grew sick, and thou didst turn
To our old hills; and there, ere long,
Love for thy Amoret, at times, would burn
In some too fervid song.

* Henry Vaughan, the Silurist, of Jesus College, died near Brecon, 1695.

But soon thy wilder pulses stayed, and life
Grown equable, thy sweet muse mild,
Sobered by tranquil love of child and wife,
Flowed pure and undefiled.

A humble healer thro' a life obscure,
Thou didst expend thy homely days;
Sweet Swan of Usk! few know how clean and pure
Are thy unheeded lays.

One poet shall become a household name
Into the nation's heart ingrown;
One, more than equal, miss the meed of fame,
And live and die unknown.

So thou, surviving in thy lonely age
All but thy own undying love,
Didst pour upon the sympathetic page
Words which all hearts can move—

So quaintly fashioned as to add a grace
To the sweet fancies which they bear,
Even as a bronze delved from some ancient place
For very dust shows fair.

"They are all gone into the world of light"!
It is thy widowed muse that sings,
And then mounts upward from our dazzled sight
On heavenward soaring wings.

"He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown,
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now
That is to him unknown.

"And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

"O father of eternal life and all
Created glories under Thee!
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty."

. . . .

Thou hast rejoined thy dear ones now, and art,
Dear soul, as then thou wouldst be, free.
I, still a prisoner, strive to do my part
In memory of thee.

Thou art so high, and yet unknown; shall I
Repine that I too am obscure?
Nay, what care I, though all my verse shall die,
If only it is pure?

So some new singer of the days to be,
Reading this page with soft young eyes,
Shall note the tribute which I pay to thee
With youth's sweet frank surprise.

And musing in himself, perchance shall say,
"Two bards whom centuries part are here—
One whose high fame and name defy decay,
And one who held him dear."

SIR LEWIS MORRIS (Jesus Coll.).
1833–1908.

BALLIOL SCHOLARS (1840–3): A REMEMBRANCE

WITHIN the ancient College-gate I passed,
Looked round once more upon the well-known square;
Change had been busy since I saw it last,
Replacing crumbled walls by new and fair;
Th' old chapel gone—a roof of statelier show
Soared high—I wondered if it sees below
As pure heart worship, as confiding prayer.

But though walls, chapel, garden, all are changed,
And through these courts quick generations fleet,
There are whom still I see round table ranged,
In chapel snowy-stoled for matins meet;
Though many faces since have come and gone,
Changeless in memory these still live on,
A Scholar brotherhood, high souled, complete.

From old foundations where the nation rears
Her darlings, came that flower of England's youth,
And here, in latest teens, or riper years,
Stood drinking in all nobleness and truth.
By streams of Isis 'twas a fervid time,
When zeal and young devotion held their prime,
Whereof not unreceptive these in sooth.

The voice* that weekly from St. Mary's spake,
As from the unseen world oracular,
Strong as another Wesley, to re-wake
The sluggish heart of England, near and far,

* J. H. Newman.

Voice so intense to win men, or repel,
Piercing, yet tender, on these spirits fell,
  Making them other, higher than they were.

Foremost * one stood, with forehead high and broad,
  Sculptor ne'er moulded grander dome of thought,
Beneath it, eyes dark-lustred rolled and glowed,
  Deep wells of feeling where the full soul wrought;
Yet lithe of limb, and strong as shepherd boy,
He roamed the wastes and drank the mountain joy,
  To cool a heart too cruelly distraught.

The voice that from St. Mary's thrilled the hour,
  He could not choose but let it in, though loath;
Yet a far other voice † with earlier power
  Had touched his soul and won his first heart-troth,
In school-days heard, not far from Avon's stream;
Anon there dawned on him a wilder dream,
  Opening strange tracts of thought remote from both.

All travail pangs of thought too soon he knew,
  All currents felt, that shake these anxious years,
Striving to walk to tender conscience true,
  And bear his load alone, nor vex his peers.
From these, alas! too soon he moved apart,
Sorrowing they saw him go, with loyal heart,
  Such heart as greatly loves, but more reveres.

Away o'er Highland bens and glens, away
  He roamed, rejoicing without let or bound;
And yearning still to vast America,
  A simpler life, more freedom, sought, not found.

* A. H. Clough. † Dr. Arnold, of Rugby.

Now the world listens to his lone soul-songs;
But he, for all its miseries and wrongs
Sad no more, sleeps beneath Italian ground.

Beside that elder scholar one * there stood,
On Sunday mornings 'mid the band white-stoled,
As deep of thought, but chastened more of mood,
Devout, affectionate and humble-souled.
There as he stood in chapel, week by week,
Lines of deep feeling furrowing down his cheek,
Lent him, even then, an aspect strangely old.

Not from the great foundations of the land,
But from a wise and learnèd father's roof
His place he won among that scholar band,
Where finest gifts of mind were put to proof;
And if some things he missed which great schools teach,
More precious traits he kept, beyond their reach,
Shy traits that rougher world had scared aloof.

Him early prophet souls of Oriel
A boy-companion to their converse drew,
And yet his thought was free and pondered well
All sides of truth, and gave to each its due.
O pure wise heart, and guileless as a child!
In thee, all jarring discords reconciled,
Knowledge and reverence undivided grew.

Ah me! We dreamed it had been his to lead
The world by power of deeply-pondered books,
And lure a rash and hasty age to heed
Old truths set forth with fresh and winsome looks

* Constantine Pritchard.

But he those heights forsook for the low vale
And sober shades, where dwells misfortune pale,
  And sorrow pines in unremembered nooks.

Where'er a lone one lay and had no friend,
  A son of consolation there was he;
And all life long there was no pain to tend
  No grief to solace, but his heart was free;
And then, his years of pastoral service done,
And his long suffering meekly borne, he won
  A grave of peace by England's southern sea.

More than all arguments in deep books stored,
  Than any preacher's penetrative tone,
More than all music by rapt poet poured,
  To have seen thy life, thy converse to have known,
Was witness for thy Lord—that thus to be
Humble and true and loving, like to thee—
  This was worth living for, and this alone.

Fair-haired and tall, slim but of stately mien,
  Inheritor of a high poetic name,
Another,* in the bright bloom of nineteen,
  Fresh from the pleasant fields of Eton came;
Whate'er of beautiful or poet sung,
Or statesman uttered, round his memory clung;
  Before him shone resplendent heights of fame.

With friends around the board, no wit so fine
  To wing the jest, the sparkling tale to tell;
Yet oft-times listening in St. Mary's shrine,
  Profounder moods upon his spirit fell;

* J. D. Coleridge, afterwards Lord Chief Justice.

We heard him then, England has heard him since,
Uphold the fallen, make the guilty wince,
And the hushed senate has confessed the spell.

There, too, was one,* broad-browed, with open face,
And frame for toil compacted—him with pride
A school of Devon from a rural place
Had sent to stand these chosen ones beside;
From childhood trained all hardness to endure,
To love the things that noble are, and pure,
And think and do the truth, whate'er betide.

With strength for labour, "as the strength of ten,"
To ceaseless toil he girt him night and day;
A native king and ruler among men,
Ploughman or Premier, born to bear true sway;
Small or great duty never known to shirk,
He bounded joyously to sternest work—
Less buoyant others turn to sport and play.

Comes brightly back one day—he had performed
Within the Schools some more than looked-for feat,
And friends and brother scholars round him swarmed
To give the day to gladness that was meet;
Forth to the fields we fared—among the young
Green leaves and grass, his laugh the loudest rung;
Beyond the rest his bound flew far and fleet.

All afternoon o'er Shotover's breezy heath
We ranged, through bush and brake instinct with Spring,
The vernal dream-lights o'er the plains beneath
Trailed, overhead the skylarks carolling;

* F. Temple, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

Then home through evening-shadowed fields we went,
And filled our College rooms with merriment—
Pure joys, whose memory contains no sting.

And thou wast there that day, my earliest friend,*
In Oxford! sharer of that joy the while!
Ah me, with what delightsome memories blend
"Thy pale, calm face; thy strangely-soothing smile;"
What hours come back, when, pacing College walks,
New knowledge dawned on us, or friendly talks
Inserted, long night-labours would beguile.

What strolls through meadows mown of fragrant hay,
On summer evenings by smooth Cherwell stream,
When Homer's song, or chaunt from Shelley's lay,
Added new splendour to the sunset gleam;
Or how, on calm of Sunday afternoon,
Keble's low, sweet voice to devout commune,
And heavenward musings, would the hours redeem.

But when on crimson creeper o'er the wall
Autumn his finger beautifully impressed,
And came the third time, at October's call,
Cheerily trooping to their rooms the rest,
Filling them with glad greetings and young glee,
His room alone was empty—henceforth we
By his sweet fellowship no more were blest.

Too soon, too quickly from our longing sight,
Fading he passed, and left us to deplore
From all our Oxford day a lovely light
Gone, which no after morning could restore.

* J. Billingsly Seymour.

Through his own meadows Cherwell still wound on,
And Thames by Eton fields as glorious shone—
He who so loved them would come back no more.

Among that scholar band the youngest pair
In hall and chapel side by side were seen,
Each of high hopes and noble promise heir,
But far in thought apart—a world between.
The one * wide-welcomed for a father's fame,
Entered with free, bold step that seemed to claim
Fame for himself, nor on another lean.

So full of power, yet blithe and debonair,
Rallying his friends with pleasant banter gay,
Or half a-dream chaunting with jaunty air
Great words of Goethe, catch of Béranger.
We see the banter sparkle in his prose,
But knew not then the undertone that flows,
So calmly sad, through all his stately lay.

The other,† of an ancient name, erst dear
To Border Hills, though thence too long exiled,
In lore of Hellas scholar without peer,
Reared in grey halls on banks of Severn piled;
Reserved he was, of few words and slow speech,
But dwelt strange power, that beyond words could reach,
In that sweet face by no rude thought defiled.

Oft at the hour when round the board at wine,
Friends met, and others' talk flowed fast and free,
His listening silence and grave look benign
More than all speech made sweet society.

* Matthew Arnold. † James Riddell.

But when the rowers, on their rivals gaining,
Close on the goal bent, every sinew straining—
  Then who more stout, more resolute than he?

With that dear memory come back most of all
  Calm days in Holy Week together spent:
The brightness of the Easter Festival
  O'er all things streaming, as afield we went
Up Hincksey-vale, where gleamed the young primroses,
And happy children gathered them in posies,
  Of that glad season meet accompaniment.

Of that bright band already more than half
  Have passed beyond earth's longing and regret;
The remnant, for grave thought or pleasant laugh,
  Can meet no more as once of old they met;
Yet, O pure souls! there are who still retain
Deep in their hearts the high ideal strain
  They heard with you and never can forget.

To have passed with them the threshold of young life,
  Where the man meets, not yet absorbs the boy;
And, ere descending to the dusty strife,
  Gazed from clear heights of intellectual joy;
That an undying image left enshrined,
A sense of nobleness in human kind,
  Experience cannot dim, nor time destroy.

Since then, through all the jars of life's routine,
  All that down-drags the spirit's loftier mood,
I have been soothed by fellowship serene

Of single souls with heaven's own light endued.
But look where'er I may—before, behind—
I have not found, nor now expect to find,
Another such high-hearted brotherhood.

JOHN CAMPBELL SHAIRP (Balliol College),
Professor of Poetry.
March 1873.

THE LAST WALK FROM BOAR'S HILL : TO ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

I

ONE after one they go ; and glade and heath,
Where once we walked with them, and garden bowers
They made so dear, are haunted by the hours
Once musical of those who sleep beneath ;
One after one does Sorrow's every wreath
Bind closer you and me with funeral flowers,
And love and memory from each loss of ours
Forge conquering glaives to quell the conqueror Death.

Since Love and Memory now refuse to yield
The friend with whom we walk through mead and field
To-day as on that day when last we parted,
Can he be dead, indeed, whatever seem ?
Love shapes a presence out of memory's dream,
A living presence, Jowett golden-hearted.

II

Can he be dead ? We walk through flowery ways
From Boar's Hill down to Oxford, fain to know
What nugget-gold, in drift of Time's long flow,
The Bodleian mine hath stored from richer days ;
He, fresh as on that morn, with sparkling gaze,
Hair bright as sunshine, white as moonlit snow,
Still talks of Plato while the scene below
Breaks gleaming through the veil of sunlit haze.

Can he be dead? He shares our homeward walk,
And by the river you arrest the talk
To see the sun transfigure ere he sets
The boatmen's children shining in the wherry
And on the floating bridge the ply-rope wets,
Making the clumsy craft an angel's ferry.

III

The river crossed, we walk 'neath glowing skies
Through grass where cattle feed or stand and stare
With burnished coats, glassing the coloured air—
Fading as colour after colour dies:
We pass the copse; we round the leafy rise—
Start many a coney and partridge, hern and hare:
We win the scholar's nest—his simple fare
Made royal-rich by welcome in his eyes.

Can he be dead? His heart was drawn to you.
Ah! well that kindred heart within him knew
The poet's heart of gold that gives the spell!
Can he be dead? Your heart being drawn to him,
How shall even Death make that dear presence dim
For you who loved him—us who loved him well?

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.

OXFORD: TO ARTHUR GALTON

OVER, the four long years! And now there rings
One voice of freedom and regret: Farewell!
Now old remembrance sorrows and now sings:
But song from sorrow, now, I cannot tell.

City of weathered cloister and worn court;
Grey city of strong towers and clustering spires;
Where art's fresh loveliness would first resort;
Where lingering art kindled her latest fires.

Where, on all hands, wondrous with ancient grace,
Grace, touched with age, rise works of goodliest mien,
Next Wykeham's art obtain their splendid place
The zeal of Inigo, the strength of Wren.

Where at each coign of every antique street,
A memory hath taken root in stone,
There, Raleigh shone; there, toiled Franciscan feet;
There, Johnson flinched not, but endured, alone.

There, Shelley dreamed his white Platonic dreams,
There, classic Landor throve on Roman thought,
There, Addison pursued his quiet themes,
There, smiled Erasmus, and there, Colet taught.

And there, O memory more sweet than all!
Lived he, whose eyes keep yet our passing light;
Whose crystal lips Athenian speech recall,
Who wears Rome's purple with least pride, most right.

That is the Oxford, strong to charm us yet,
Eternal in her beauty and her past.
What though her soul be vexed? She can forget
Cares of an hour: only the great things last.

Only the gracious air, only the charm,
And ancient might of true humanities:
These nor assault of man, nor time, can harm;
Not these, nor Oxford with her memories.

Together have we walked with willing feet
Gardens of plenteous trees, bowering soft lawn,
Hills, whither Arnold wandered; and all sweet
June meadows, from the troubling world withdrawn.

Chapels of cedarn fragrance, and rich gloom
Poured from empurpled panes on either hand;
Cool pavements, carved with legends of the tomb;
Grave haunts, where we might dream and understand.

Over, the four long years! And unknown powers
Call to us, going forth upon our way;
Ah! turn we, and look back upon the towers,
That rose above our lives and cheered the day.

Proud and serene, against the sky, they gleam.
Proud and secure, upon the earth, they stand:
Our city hath the air of a pure dream,
And here indeed is an Hesperian land.

Think of her so! the wonderful, the fair,
The immemorial and the ever young:
The city, sweet with our forefathers' care;
The city, where the Muses all have sung.

Ill times may be; she hath no thought of time;
She reigns beside the waters yet in pride.
Rude voices cry; but in her ears the chime
Of full, sad bells brings back her old springtide.

OXFORD FROM THE CASTLE KEEP

Drawn by P. DE WINT *and engraved by* H. LE KEUX

From the Oxford Almanac of 1838

To face p. 92

Like to a queen in pride of place, she wears
The splendour of a crown in Radcliffe's dome.
Well, fare she well! As perfect beauty fares;
And those high places, that are beauty's home.

LIONEL JOHNSON (New College, 1890).

FANCY'S RETREAT *

WHERE, by remorse impelled, repulsed by fears,
Shall wretched Fancy a retreat explore?
She flies the sad presage of coming years,
And sorrowing dwells on pleasures now no more.

Again with patrons and with friends she roves,
But friends and patrons never to return;
She sees the Nymphs, the Graces and the Loves,
But sees them weeping o'er Lucinda's urn.

She visits, Isis, thy forsaken stream,
Oh! ill-forsaken for Boeotian air;
She deems no flood reflects so bright a beam,
No reed so verdant and no flower so fair.

She dreams beneath thy sacred shades were peace,
Thy bays might e'en the civil storm repel;
Reviews thy social bliss, thy learned ease,
And with no cheerful accent cries, Farewell!

Farewell with whom to these retreats I strayed,
By youthful sports, by youthful toils allied;
Joyous we sojourned in thy circling shade,
And wept to find the paths of life divide.

W. SHENSTONE (Pembroke College).
1714–1763.
From an "Elegy to the Winds."

A. H. CLOUGH AT HARVARD

AND he, our passing guest,
Shy nature too and strong with Life's unrest,
Whom we too briefly had, but could not hold,
Who brought ripe Oxford's culture to our board
The Past's incalculable hoard,
Mellowed by scutcheoned panes in cloisters old,
Seclusions ivy-hushed and pavements sweet
With immemorial lisp of musing feet,
Young head time-tonsured, smoother than a friar's,
Boy face, but grave with answerless desires.

J. R. LOWELL.

From "Agassiz."

PLACID OXFORD

CAN I, while memory lasts, forget,
Oxford, thy silver rolling stream;
Thy silent walks, and cool retreat,
When first I sucked the love of Fame?
E'en now the thought inspires my breast,
And lulls my troubled soul to rest.

There no enthusiastic rant
Shall ever wound my patient ear;
Nor bigot's mystic senseless cant,
Nor methodistic jargon there,
Shall ever haunt those peaceful cells,
Where sweetly-musing Quiet dwells.

Whether with philosophic eye
The distant worlds we aim t' explore;
Or into nature's secrets pry,
The paths which Newton trod before;
Isis, thy genius hovers round
And still protects thy favourite ground.

There we may chaunt the reigning lass,
Or in just measures briskly move;
Or toast Corinna o'er the glass
Or taste the sweets of social love:
Chase superstition out of season,
Blest with plain sense and sober reason.

AMICUS.

"*The Student*," 1751.

DETUR ALIQUID AETATI

SO on thy banks too, Isis, have I strayed,
A tassel'd student. Witness you who shar'd
My morning walk, my ramble at high noon,
My evening voyage, an unskilful sail
To Godstow bound, or some inferior port,
For strawberries and cream. What have we found
In life's austerer hours, delectable
As the long day so loitered? Ye profound
And serious heads, who guard the twin retreats
Of British learning, give the studious boy
His due indulgence! Let him range the field,
Frequent the public walk, and freely pull
The yielding oar! But mark the truant well,
And if he turn aside to vice or folly,
Shew him the rod, and let him feel you prize
The parent's happiness, the public good.

JAMES HURDIS, D.D. (Fellow of Magdalen),
1763-1801,
Professor of Poetry in 1793.
From "The Village Curate."

THE BELLS OF OXFORD

THEN let the village bells, as often wont,
Come swelling on the breeze, and to the sun,
Half-set, sing merrily their evening song.
I ask not for the cause—it matters not.
It is enough for me to hear the sound
Of the remote exhilarating peal,
Now dying all away, now faintly heard,
And now with loud and musical relapse
Its mellow changes huddling on the ear.
So have I stood at eve on Isis' banks,
To hear the merry Christ Church bells rejoice.
So have I sate too in thy honoured shades,
Distinguished Magdalen, on Cherwell's brink,
To hear thy silver Wolsey tones so sweet.
And so, too, have I paused and held my oar,
And suffered the slow stream to bear me home,
While Wykeham's peal along the meadow ran.

JAMES HURDIS.

From "The Village Curate."

OXFORD

WHAT did we seek in the days that are long gone by?
Friendship of heart with heart, and joy in the battle cry:
Service in Church and in State, in our poverty toiling for bread;
Such was the life we lived in the days that are long since dead.

What did we seek in the days that but lately are past?
Service of God in His Church, if His Church could be found at last:
Rubbing of Creed with Creed till Truth should shine to the light.
Such were the dreams we dreamed in days newly passed into night.

What are the dreams we dream in the stress of the life of the hour?
Knowledge enlarging its span, and Thought's invincible power:
Freedom embracing the world and Authority bowed to the door:
And Wealth giving strenuous heed to the clamant prayer of the poor.

Oxford, thy sons will serve thee with love and with honour for aye:
Though we pass as the foam of the waves by the west wind hurried away:

Friendship and Service are true, and Knowledge and
Worship abide.
God bring us all to His haven beyond the sundering tide!

BERNARD W. HENDERSON (Exeter College).

From "At Intervals."

THE LAST EVENING

O SUMMER eve, rest gently on these walls,
On these grey walls and bid them our farewell.
Soft falls the night: Tower to Tower calls,
Wrapped round with silver spell.

The college slumbers, dreaming quiet dreams
For us, the children of her ancient lore.
Our joy a moment's span of her life seems,
And we return no more.

Others will fill our places here when next
Time's painting colours all the woods with gold;
Others will roam, as free and unperplexed,
O'er Cumnor ridge and wold.

Others from drifting Eight will watch the glee
Of waters foaming over Iffley weir,
And mark the whispers of the drooping tree,
Dirge of a dying year.

Others will share the quick exchange of thought,
Their friendly rivalry of fancy feed,
And tell anew the tale of deeds well wrought
On river and on mead.

Shadows pass slowly o'er the Chapel spire;
The wind sighs softly 'mid the ivy leaves;
Shares too the College this our vain desire,
And with our longing grieves?

As stands some mother on a lonely shore,
And at her feet the heaving sullen sea
Parts from her wistful gaze the sons she bore
And lost but yesterday:

The castl'd clouds frown heavy in the west :
  The sea-bird shrill her sad complaining makes
The fretting wave, with far-flung tassell'd crest,
    In surge unpitying breaks ;

Or as when lurid shaft of ruddy light
  Strikes broad athwart the desert's answering glow,
The pilgrims quit their bourne of yesternight
    And slow their road pursue.

Nay ! Though she welcome others in our stead,
  Our College, stronger as long years recede
Which link us living to her noble dead,
    Bids us with hope Godspeed.

O summer eve, rest gently on these walls,
  These ancient walls, to which we bid farewell.
The love we render, whatsoe'er befalls,
    Not ours in word to tell.

BERNARD W. HENDERSON.

From "At Intervals."

THE LONG-DEAD HOUR

AGAIN that hour has struck, has dropped again
Into the gulf whence nothing may resurge;
Yet Lo! with hollow iteration vain.

Itself the phantom and the thaumaturge,
The old long-dead inevitable hour
'Neath the emerging stars shall re-emerge.

Once heedlessly, as, ignorant of their power,
A wizard's child might hear such dooming spells
As make the dead to groan and brave men cower

Muttering hoarse prayers, so have I heard the bells;
Heard in the green hush of some long-drawn bower,
Walks where a legendary shade compels

Day to its hue, where slow, with mirrored tower,
Garden and bridge that waver as it goes
Cherwell to Isis bears its meadowy dower,

Strewn hawthorn petals, shatterings of the rose;
Serene as it could know their garland bright
Year after year renews, and even as those,

Brings to the winding wave its joyous freight
Of eager youth, to push adventurous prows
Far up its ancient ways with new delight
Or dream old dreams under its haunted boughs.

MARGARET L. WOODS.

From "Aeromancy."

OXFORD REVISITED

TIMID and strange, like a ghost, I pass the familiar portals,
Echoing now like a tomb, they accept me no more as of old;
Yet I go wistfully onward, a shade thro' a kingdom of mortals
Wanting a face to greet me, a hand to grasp and to hold.

Hardly I know as I go if the beautiful City is only
Mocking me under the moon, with its streams and its willows agleam,
Whether the City of friends or I that am friendless and lonely,
Whether the boys that go by or the time-worn towers be the dream;

Whether the walls that I know, or the unknown fugitive faces,
Faces like those that I loved, faces that haunt and waylay,
Faces so like and unlike, in the dim unforgettable places,
Startling the heart into sickness that aches with the sweet of the May,

Whether all these or the world with its wars be the wandering shadows!
Ah! sweet over green-gloomed waters the May hangs, crimson and white;
And quiet canoes creep down by the warm gold dusk of the meadows,
Lapping with little splashes and ripples of silvery light.

Others like me have returned; I shall see the old faces
to-morrow,
Down by the gay-coloured barges, alert for the throb
of the oars,
Wanting to row once again, or tenderly jesting with
sorrow
Up the old stairways and noting the strange new
names on the doors.

Is it a dream? And I know not nor care if there be an
awaking
Ever at all any more, for the years that have torn us
apart,
Few, so few as they are, will ever be rending and
breaking;
Sooner by far than I knew have they wrought this
change for my heart.

Well; I grow used to it now! Could the dream but
remain and for ever,
With the flowers round the grey quadrangle laughing
as time grows old!
For the waters go down to the sea, but the sky still
gleams on the river!
We plucked them—but there shall be lilies, ivory lilies
and gold.

And still in the beautiful City, the river of life is no duller,
Only a little strange as the eighth hour dreamily chimes,
In the City of friends and echoes, ribbons and music and
colour,
Lilac and blossoming chestnut, willows and whispering
limes.

Over the Radcliffe Dome the moon, as the ghost of a flower
Weary and white awakes in the phantom fields of the sky,
The trustful shepherded clouds are asleep over steeple and tower,
Dark under Magdalen walls the Cher like a dream goes by.

Back, we come wandering back, poor ghosts, to the home that one misses
Out in the shelterless world, the world that was heaven to us then,
Back from the coil and the vastness, the stars and the boundless abysses,
Like monks from a pilgrimage stealing in bliss to their cloisters again.

City of dreams that we lost, accept now the gift we inherit—
Love, such a love as we knew not of old in the blaze of our noon,
We that have found thee at last, half City, half heavenly Spirit,
While over a mist of spires the sunset mellows the moon.

ALFRED NOYES (Exeter College).

From "Forty Singing Seamen."

NORTH-EAST VIEW OF WADHAM COLLEGE

From a Drawing by F. MACKENZIE *for the Oxford Almanac of* 1849

To face p. 106

ALMA MATER

KNOW you her secret none can utter?
Her of the Book, the tripled Crown?
Still on the spire the pigeons flutter
Still by the gateway flits the gown:
Still in the street, from corbel and gutter
Faces of stone look down.

Faces of stone and other faces—
Some from library windows wan
Forth on her gardens, her green spaces
Peer and turn to their books anon.
Hence, my Muse, from the green oases
Gather the tent, begone!

Nay, should she by the pavement linger,
Under the rooms where once she played,
Who from the feast would rise to fling her
One poor sou for her serenade?
One poor laugh for the antic finger
Thrumming a lute-string frayed?

Once, my dear—but the world was young then—
Magdalen elms and Trinity limes—
Lissom the oars and backs that swung then,
Eight good men in the good old times—
Careless we and the chorus flung then
Under St. Mary's chimes!

Reins lay loose and the ways led random—
Christ-Church meadow and Iffley track—

"Idleness horrid and dog-cart" (tandem)
Aylesbury grind and Bicester pack—
Pleasant our lines and faith! we scanned 'em;
—Having that artless knack.

Come, old limmer, the times grow colder;
Leaves of the creeper redden and fall,
Was it a hand, then, clapped my shoulder?
—Only the wind by the chapel wall.
Dead leaves drift on thy lute: so fold her
Under thy faded shawl.

Never we wince though none deplore us,
We who go reaping that we sowed;
Cities at cock-crow wake before us—
Hey, for the lilt of the London road!
One look back and a rousing chorus,
Never a palinode!

Still on her spire the pigeons hover;
Still by her gateway haunts the gown;
Ah, but her secret? you, young lover,
Drumming her old ones forth from town,
Know you the secret none discover?
Tell it when *you* go down.

Yet if at length you seek her, prove her,
Lean to her whispers never so nigh;
Yet if at last not less her lover
You in your hansom leave the High;
Down from her towers a ray shall hover—
Touch you, a passer-by.

A. T. Quiller-Couch (Trinity College, 1896).

GLORIOUS OXFORD

ONCE more to Oxford ! Once again
These towers and spires, above the plain
That Isis laves enlarged to view,
The old familiar sense renew
Of "Term Time." As once more our day
Were young, not three-parts worn away !
With joy th' approaching wanderers see
Each well-known mark, from Magdalen tower
To distant Godstow's convent bower.
Each pile in glorious order shown :
A day dream realised in stone.
Christ Church and Radcliffe's curving dome,
Where learning finds a worthy home,
Enlink the sterner lines that leap
From Merton's battlemented keep
To New and Magdalen. While yet higher
Soars above all that peerless spire,
St. Mary's own, so pure, so free :
The flower of perfect symmetry.
Now let us turn awhile to look
On Christ Church spire and that rare nook
Where Pusey lies in holy sleep ;
Or Magdalen's cloistered shadows deep
Seek just as evening broods serene
O'er tower and tree, and all that matchless scene.
Then let us walk by Cherwell's stream
Till youth's gay fancies almost seem
Recalled in all their glamour. Stay !
Was that the shape ?—'Tis but the play
Of sunbeams on some stem ! There's not
A soul in sight : and we forgot
The stifling drift of years that lies

'Twixt now and such fond memories!
Or, once more, crossing Hincksey's rills
We'll search the warm "green-muffled hills"
Of Cumnor, if some lingering trace
Might still be found, or face to face
We Philistines may e'en have sight
Perchance of that poor wandering wight
Whom 'twas the poet's dream to meet
Still hiding in that "shy retreat."
('Tis but a poet's dream: and yet
We would not lose it, nor forget
That anguished cry of harrowing doubt
From a racked soul. Could such without
Response unheeded fall apart,
Nor vibrate to the All-pitying Heart?)

Nor less due reverence must we pay
To Isis; e'er our homeward way
We take—loved Isis, pouring clear
His infant streamlets far and near,
From Gloucester mead, from Cotswold down,
Till, like a Freshman come to town,
At Oxford hastily, as late
Of growth, he swells to full estate.
So he may furnish in his tide
An ampler mirror to the Pride
Of Architecture, Learning's Prize,
The Queen of Universities
That sits enthronéd by his verdant side.

Come last and take our morning's run
To Shotover and Headington,
Where mounted high above the town

Through some green slit we may look down
And see it all as in a frame :
St. Mary's like a frozen flame
Leap sunwards; while her studious train
Of spires and towers along the plain
Stand praying round her, like a court,
In silent adoration. Wrought
These miracles of craftsmanship
By hands now dust, and like to slip
From memory ! Yet we their praise
Will sing full measure as we gaze
Upon their deeds from this clear height.
Dear Heaven ! for no more glorious sight
Could human thought create, nor one
More fair be greeted by the morning sun.

L. B.

Oxford Magazine, May 1906.

EHEU FUGACES

OH for the promise and glory of morning
Now that our mid-day has come!
Hopes that were made for us in the grey dawning—
Shall any follow us home?

Oh for the days when we dreamily wandered
Over old fields that we know!
Godstow and Wytham; and ever we squandered
What were now Heaven below.

Born on the Cherwell the mist, we remember,
Shrouded the Parks as we played,
Ah but our life now is always November,
Summer is ever delayed!

Splashing of oars on the wide-flooded river
'Minds us of friends that are gone,
Friends that are lost to us—is it for ever?—
And we must follow alone.

Oh for the days when we loved and had lovers!
That was our best time in truth,
Now no kind heaven those moments recovers—
Oh for the days of our youth!

Oh for the promise and glory of morning
Now that our mid-day has come!
Hopes that were made for us then in the dawning
Can any follow us home?

B. N.

Oxford Magazine, 1899.

VIXERUNT

ROYAL heart, loyal heart, comrade that I loved,
Mindest thou the merry days when thou and I were young?
Ever think'st of college and the dawn when we were sent there?
The madness and the melody, the singing youth that went there?
The shining, unforgettable, imperial days we spent there?
How it grew upon the eye,
That long curving of the High,
Curving into misty blueness dimming all the lower end,
Where the river ran to greet her like a friend to greet a friend.

Mind'st thou our quad? The gate, the walls, the feel of it,
The lawn and window boxes and the tortoise on the walk?
Little pebbly walk that set the echoes going,
Little pebbly beach where the tide of youth was flowing,
Tide that flowed away, away, away beyond our knowing.
Nowadays there are no flowers
Like those window ones of ours;
Was it blood, the blood of youth, dyed those hot geraniums red?
Hot geraniums, hot youth grew them— youth and flowers —withered, dead.

Mind'st thou thy room? the stairs, the loose door-handle?
The pictures and the sofa and the oar along the wall?
Mantelpiece, books, lad, how I see the way of it!

See thee writing Latin prose and making awful hay of it!
See us talk the short night through, through to the early grey of it.
In the twilights, in the gloom,
Are there ghosts, lad, in that room?
Shapes that sing, and jest and argue, ghosts of friendship, ghosts of mirth,
Friendships ended, scattered, broken, tossed haphazard through the earth.

Lad, the tears are in my eyes. Are thine dry?
Dry when thou rememberest the magic of those nights?
Warm June nights that set the blood a-leaping;
Misty moon-lit air where our silver tower was sleeping,
Little lamp-lit windows, like friends' eyes peeping,
Eyes of welcome in the night,
Shining eyes of young delight,
Where the songs of joy and laughter set the hollow cloister ringing,
How it beat into the night-time, all the talking, all the singing!

Mind'st thou the days on the happy, happy Cherwell,
Drowned a thousand fathom deep in crystal summer air?
Floating on dream river with the weed the paddles locking,
Slow invading ripples setting all the lilies rocking—
Mind'st thou that frog we put in Harry's stocking?
Harry, as he went a-swimming
Where the may-fly all were skimming,
Till he landed, mother-naked, in the hospitable hay:
Does he mind it now, I wonder, District-judging, in Bombay?

Mind'st thou the bells? What a place it was for bells, lad!
Spires as sharp as thrushes' bills to pierce the sky with song.
How it shook the heart of one, the swaying and the swinging,
How it set the blood a-tramp and all the brains a-singing,
Aye, and what a world of thought the calmer chimes came bringing,
Telling praises every hour
To His majesty and power,
Telling prayers with punctual service, summers, centuries, how long?
The beads upon our rosary of immemorial song.

Mind'st thou that merry, mad Commemoration,
In picnic with Hal's sisters when thou taughtest them to punt?
Mind'st thou the curve of those slender bodies leaning?
Mind'st thou the burnish of that hair the wind was preening?
Mind'st thou the dip of the vessel's soft careening?
And the murmurings at the prow,
Do thy dull ears hear them now?
Murmurings of the drifting waters that the willows stooped to hear,
Murmurings, laughings, lovings, drifting, drifting to the strangling weir.

Mind'st thou that dawn, we had sped the night a-talking,
Found a door unlocked and climbed upon our tower?
Saw the city like a jewel, cut and polished, diamond bright,

Little shining eyes of windows, vanes and finials kissed
with light,
Fresh and newly-waked and fragrant from the tender
breath of night;
Silent, stainless, still, serene,
Dawn had found her, crowned her Queen,
In her ark of elms and willows found her where her
rivers run,
Kissed her open-eyed and left her smiling back into the
sun.

Aye, there she stands, her feet in running water,
The grey-haired beaten body with the heart of twenty-
one:
Warrior-queen, with her spires alert like lances,
Grey winter-head, June-hot with summer fancies,
Worn wise heart, where the madcap vintage dances!
Mother, mistress of us all,
We, her sons, her lovers, call,
Call her by her singing rivers, and she smiles to us and
hears,
Fresh girl lips of laughing kisses, tender mother-eyes of
tears.

EMERITUS.

Oxford Magazine, Jan. 1906.

OXFORD

CITY of my love and dreams,
Lady throned by limpid streams,
'Neath the shadow of thy towers,
Numbered I my happiest hours.
Here the youth became a man,
Thought and reason here began,
Love was greater than a name,
Charity and Patience came.
Here the friendships first were new,
Till with time they waxed and grew.
Ah my friends! I held you then
Perfect types of perfect men.
Glamour fades, I know not how,
Ye have all your failings now.
City lying green and low
Thou didst teach me all I know,
Magic verse of Sophocles,
Wit of Aristophanes,
Splendour of the golden age,
Lore of philosophic page.
More than all, I learned to find
Secrets of the mortal mind,
Learned 'tis not enough to scan
Outward seeming of the man,
Some were baser than they seemed,
Some were nobler than I deemed,
This and more thou didst for me,
Humble thanks I render thee,
City of my love and dreams
Lady throned by limpid streams.

JAMES WILLIAMS (Lincoln College).

From "The Oxford Magazine," May 1908.

A PLACE OF GHOSTS

I WILL go up on Cumnor height
  Amid the early mist,
And watch the city change to white
  Her spires of amethyst.

There, lying on a couch of turves,
  My eager eyes shall roam
From Marston, where the Cherwell curves,
  To Radcliffe's dew-bright dome.

The sheer light falls on roofs and towers,
  The Christ Church belfry gleams;
And Magdalen, like a lily, flowers
  Above her sundering streams.

Far down the breeze that sinks and swells,
  There comes once more the chime
Of leisurely, ancestral bells,
  Worn thin and sweet with time.

O bells that echo in the street,
  With mellow tongues that say:
"Come out, come out, you glad young feet,
  To tread the golden way!"

One son you own who ne'er returns
  To your most generous doors;
Who treads the lonely height and learns
  A darker lore than yours.

Easy and beautiful the path
  That leads to her below ;
O short and beautiful the path,
  But yet I will not go.

For in her streets at every turn,
  And in each cloistered place,
My eyes would search, my heart would burn
  For some remembered face.

O Men who tread the ancient ways
  About the lovely town,
Fair be your sojourn, long your days !
  But my Men have gone down.

The elms are bare, the creepers die
  In scarlet on the wall :
It is a place of ghosts, and I
  Am ghostlier than all.

ST. JOHN LUCAS (University College).

From "The Return," 1908.

SONNETS

Stately thy walls and holy are the prayers
Which day and night before thine altars rise;
Not statelier, towering o'er her marble stairs
Flashed Sion's gilded dome to summer skies,
Not holier, while around him angels bowed,
From Aaron's censer steamed the spicy cloud

Before the mercy-seat. O Mother dear,
Wist thou forgive thy son one boding sigh?
Forgive, if round thy towers he walk in fear,
And tell thy jewels o'er with jealous eye?
Mindful of that sad vision, which in thought
From Chebar's plains the captive prophet brought.

JOHN KEBLE.

From "The Christian Year."

THE HIGH STREET

Drawn by A. PUGIN *and engraved by* J. BLACK

From Ackerman's "Oxford," 1814

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OXFORD

YE sacred nurseries of blooming youth !
In whose collegiate shelter England's flowers
Expand, enjoying through their vernal hours
The air of liberty, the light of truth ;
Much have ye suffered from Time's gnawing tooth,
Yet, O ye spires of Oxford ! domes and towers !
Gardens and groves ! your presence overpowers
The soberness of reason ; till, in sooth,
Transformed, and rushing on a bold exchange,
I slight my own belovéd Cam, to range
Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet ;
Pace the long avenue or glide adown
The stream-like windings of that glorious street,
An eager novice robed in fluttering gown.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Oxford, May 30, 1820.

OXFORD REVISITED

MOTHER! mild Mother! after many years—
So many that the head I bow turns grey—
Come I once more to thee, thinking to say
In what far lands, through what hard hopes and fears,
'Mid how much toil and triumph, joys and tears,
I taught thy teaching; and withal to lay
At thy kind feet such of my wreaths as may
Seem least unworthy. But what grown child dares
Offer thee honours, Fair and Queenly One!
Tower-crowned and girdled with thy silver streams,
Mother of ah! so many a better son?
Let me but list thy solemn voice, which seems
Like Christ's, raising my dead, and let me be
Back for one hour—a Boy—beside thy knee.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD (University College).
May 1883.

OXFORD FROM BAGLEY, 8 A.M.

THE flood is round thee, but thy towers as yet
Are safe, and, clear as by a summer's sea,
Pierce the calm morning mist, serene and free,
To point in silence heavenward. There are met
Thy foster-children ; there in order set
Their nursing-fathers, sworn to Heaven and thee
(An oath renewed this hour on bended knee)
Ne'er to betray their Mother nor forget.
Lo ! on the top of each aerial spire
What seems a star by day, so high and bright,
It quivers from afar in golden light ;
But 'tis a form of earth, though touched with fire
Celestial, raised in other days to tell
How, when they tired of prayer, Apostles fell.

JOHN KEBLE (Corpus Christi College).
1792-1866.

OXFORD MEMORIES

OXFORD, since late I left thy peaceful shore,
Much I regret thy domes with turrets crowned,
Thy crested walls with twining ivy bound,
Thy gothic fanes, dim aisles and cloisters hoar,
And treasured rolls of wisdom's ancient lore;
Nor less thy varying bells, which hourly sound
In pensive chime, or ring in lively round,
Or toll in the slow curfew's solemn roar.
Much, too, thy midnight walks and musings grave
'Mid silent shades of high-embowering trees,
And much thy sister streams, whose willows wave
In whispering cadence to the evening breeze;
But most those Friends, whose much-loved converse gave
Thy gentle charms a ten-fold power to please.

THOMAS RUSSELL (*d.* 1788).

AGED CITIES

I HAVE known cities with the strong-armed Rhine
Clasping their mouldered quays in lordly sweep ;
And lingered where the Maine's low waters shine
Through Tyrian Frankfort ; and been fain to weep
'Mid the green cliffs where pale Mozella leaves
That Roman sepulchre, imperial Treves.
Ghent boasts her street, and Bruges her moonlight square ;
And holy Mechlin, Rome of Flanders, stands
Like a queen-mother on her spacious lands ;
And Antwerp shoots her glowing spire in air.
Yet have I seen no place, by inland brook,
Hill-top or plain, or trim arcaded bowers,
That carries age so nobly in its look
As Oxford with the sun upon her towers.

F. W. FABER.

ABSENCE FROM OXFORD

FAIR City! that so long hast been my home!
When from thy quiet places I depart
By far-off hills and river banks to roam,
I bear thy name about upon my heart.
City of glorious towers! whene'er I feel
The world's rude coldness o'er my spirit steal,
Then dost thou rise to view; thine elm of groves
Vocal with hymns of praise, thine old grey halls,
Where the wan sun of Autumn sweetest falls,
Yon hill-side wood the nightingale so loves,
Thy rivers twain, of gentle foot, that pass,
Fed from a hundred willow-girded wells,
Through the rich meadow lands of long, green grass,
To the loud tunes of all thy convent bells.

F. W. FABER.

OXFORD IN MAY

WHAT city boasts herself the peer of thee,
Dear Oxford, when the mist of morning clings
Round Magdalen elms, or when the even flings
Her rosy robe on river, hill and lea?
The spirit of the summer rises free
From winter sleep and spreads her silver wings,
The sunny sky holds dreams of nobler things,
Dreams drifting helmless on a fairy sea!
In the green distance smites through cloister doors
The swift and rhythmic throb of racing oars,
The shout of victory and of defeat.
Oxford is Oxford most when May is May,
And Cherwell oarsmen pluck the hawthorn spray
From trees unpruned that shelter stripling wheat.

JAMES WILLIAMS.

From "The Oxford Year."

OXFORD

HAIL to thee, Oxford, with fair front, and free
From churchly pride and scholarly conceit,
And with wide arms of kinship spread to greet
All eager souls that seek a sign from thee!
Too long, too long men saw thee sit apart
From all the living pulses of the hour,
Glassing thyself in thy peculiar dower,
Like a vain beauty with a loveless heart.
But now God taught thine eye to look abroad
On this rich pomp of things, and recognise
In changing forms and ever new disguise
The radiant face of one unchanging God;
And in the complex play of great and small
See how all live for each, and each for all.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE (1889).

[On the inauguration of Mansfield College.]

ON REVISITING OXFORD

I NEVER hear the sound of thy glad bells,
Oxford ! and chimes harmonious, but I say
(Sighing to think how time has worn away)
"Some spirit speaks in the sweet tone that swells,
Heard after years of absence, from the vale
Where Cherwell winds." Most true it speaks the tale
Of days departed, and its voice recalls
Hours of delight and hope in the gay tide
Of life, and many friends now scattered wide
By many fates. Peace be within thy walls !
I have scarce heart to visit thee ; but yet,
Denied the joys sought in thy shades—denied
Each better hope, since my poor —— died,
What I have owed to thee my heart can ne'er forget.

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES (Trinity College).
1762–1850.

[Bowles published his sonnets—which greatly influenced Coleridge—in the hope of getting money to pay the bill of "Parsons, the mercer," at Oxford.]

OXFORD FROM MERTON CHAPEL TOWER

PEACE, silence, slumber, triple crown of night,
Circle the queenlike city. Dim the shower
Of moonbeams falls on every hoary tower,
And steeps each gabled roof in silver light.
Hushed is the latest shout of revel rite
Through the grey quadrangle ; while faintly gleams
The lamp of some pale student o'er the dreams
Of Plato, or old Homer's sounding fight.
Forth from below the mass superior stand
The tall gaunt steeples, like a faithful guard—
O, may it be so !—keeping watch and ward
Above the weary world fast locked in sleep.
Hark ! even now their voices through the band
Pass on their hourly signal, clear and deep.

J. B. Norton (Merton College).

MERTON CHAPEL

From an old Water-colour in the British Museum

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COLLEGE LIBRARY

A CHURCHYARD with a cloister running round
And quaint old effigies in act of prayer,
And painted banners mouldering strangely there
Where mitred prelates and grave doctors sleep,
Memorials of a consecrated ground!
Such is this antique room, a haunted place
Where dead men's spirits come, and angels keep
Long hours of watch with wings in silence furled.
Early and late have I kept vigil here;
And I have seen the moonlight shadows trace
Dim glories on the missal's blue and gold,
The work of my scholastic sires, that told
Of quiet ages men call dark and drear,
For Faith's soft light is darkness to the world.

F. W. FABER.

COLLEGE CHAPEL

A SHADY seat by some cool mossy spring,
Where solemn trees close round, and make a gloom,
And faint and earthy smells, as from a tomb,
Unworldly thoughts and quiet wishes bring:
Such hast thou been to me each morn and eve;
Best loved when most thy call did interfere
With schemes of toil or pleasure, that deceive
And cheat young hearts; for then thou madest me feel
The holy church more nigh, a thing to fear.
Sometimes, all day with books, thoughts proud and wild
Have risen, until I saw the sunbeams steal
Through painted glass at evensong, and weave
Their threefold tints upon the marble near,
Faith, prayer and love, the spirit of a child.

F. W. FABER.

COLLEGE GARDEN

SACRED to early morn and evening hours,
Another chapel reared for other prayers,
And full of gifts,—smells after noon-day showers,
When bright-eyed birds look out from leafy bowers,
And natural perfumes shed on midnight airs,
And bells and old church clocks and holy towers,
All heavenly images that cluster round.
The rose, and pink acacia, and green vine
Over the fretted wall together twine,
With creepers fair and many, woven up,
When Autumn comes, into a tapestry,
Richly discoloured, and inlaid for me
With golden thoughts, drunk from the dewy cup
Of morns and evenings spent in that dear ground!

F. W. FABER.

IN NEW COLLEGE CLOISTERS

IN this dim charnel house of endless death,
Where to my aching ear pass to and fro
Footfalls of weary men who once drew breath,
Soft echoes of the voices long ago,
I stand and hearken ; and methinks one saith :
'I ived and loved ; who now my love may know ! "
And lo, another : "Is it vain, my faith ? "
And yet a third : "Who reaps where I did sow ? "

Here in the wind-swept court the sodden grass
Is wet with tears of which sad hearts are fain ;
Heaven's courts are filled with penitential mass ;
What soothing answer cometh back again ?
Only the winds that mock us as they pass,
Naught but the heedless plash of sullen rain.

W. L. COURTNEY (New College).

THE CHESTNUT OF BRASENOSE

DOCTORS from Radcliffe's dome look down on thee,
Unconscious chestnut with the leafy crown!
And so on unpruned nature, fresh and free,
Learning too often looks complacent down,—
Learning decorous in her cap and gown,
And feasting on the brains of men long dead,
What should she see in all this stately town
To make her bend the knee or veil the head?
And yet not Plato, not the Stagyrite,
Could teach a bud to expand into a flower;
Take then thy pen, book-worshipper, and write,
Learning is but a secondary power—
And look not down but reverently look up
To every blossomed spray that rears its dewy cup.

HENRY GLASSFORD BELL.

AN IMPRESSION

A LITTLE sadly, but how tenderly,
The heavy rain of May drips, warm and soft;
The elms' bronze lace of twigs, fan-spread aloft,
Touches the smoky mist that blurs the sky;
The mead below has donned fresh livery;
The wet tower looms out in the west, the croft
Shows its red chimney peering o'er the loft,
Where the green leafage splashes bright and high;
For Spring is brooding amorous over all,
And Earth has wakened from her long, cold sleep,
Tho' nought her sweet grave stillness dares to move,
Till the keen pleading of a lone bird's call
Breaks forth—and all the silence seems to leap
Instinct with hope and grief and life and love.

F. York Powell (Christ Church).

BAGLEY WOOD

THE night is full of stars, full of magnificence ;
Nightingales hold the wood and fragrance loads the dark.
Behold, what fires august, what lights eternal ! Hark,
What passionate music poured in passionate love's defence !
Breathe but the wafting wind's nocturnal frankincense !
Only to feel this night's great heart, only to mark
The splendours and the glooms, brings back the patriarch,
Who on Chaldaean wastes found God through reverence.
Could we but live at will upon this perfect height,
Could we but always keep the passion of this peace,
Could we but face unshamed the look of this pure light,
Could we but win earth's heart and give desire release ;
Then were we all divine, and then were ours by right
These stars, these nightingales, these scents ; then shame would cease.

LIONEL JOHNSON (1890).

PATER AT BRASENOSE

HIGH in the forehead of the reverend wall
Irradiant as some glorious, antique name
That shines from laboured parchment like a flame,
The ivy clings, the year's memorial.
Here, where guarded cloisters silent call
To quiet tasks, unmeant for noisy fame,—
Far from the unsought voice of men's acclaim—
Sweet Pater toiled with mind angelical.
Upon the missal of high thoughts he wrought,
Striving to clothe them in the tenderest grace;
Subtle illumination ever sought,
With undimmed chastity of text to trace;
And bending o'er his cheerful page he slept,
Smiling at Fancy, while she, grieving, wept.

G. N. N.

Oxford Magazine, 1905

THE WALK OF THE TWO TOWERS

SURELY this walk, straight, simple in its line,
Was fashioned by some holy-hearted man,
That, at each limit turning, he might scan
Thy tower, dear Merton, or, fair Magdalen, thine,
Point skyward with solemnity divine;
So, while he walked, were his reflections given
In ceaseless meditation to the heaven
Of which his eyes beheld the earthly sign:—
Thus, while slow pacing, often pausing, there,
I loved, perchance erroneously, to dream;
And O, methought, with an unuttered prayer,
May my life's pathway, level, straight, and true,
Like this, with cause for holy breathings teem,
Begin and end with God, him alway view.

J. B. NORTON.

THE RIDE

OUR steeds are ready ; whither shall we ride ?
To Woodstock, where a woman's jealous hate
Gave her frail rival horrid choice of fate,
And Blenheim rises in majestic pride ?
Or to Old Cumnor, where false Leicester's bride,
Like a fair falcon by the hawker lured,
Was in the shades of that grim place immured,
Till, trusting to Love's well-feigned note, she died ?
Or shall we slowly saunter to the wood
Of Bagley, there explore each sylvan glen ;
Or to the Quentin, sport of ages rude,
On the green heights of open Bullenden ?
Lead where you will, I follow, friend, to-night :
All ways are equal to a spirit light.

J. B. NORTON.

MERTON MEADOWS

GAY with June's livery of liveliest green,
By daisies crimson-edged and cowslip-dyed,
Smile Merton meadows in their summer pride,
While far-off Isis glints back steely sheen,
Yon stately avenue's tall trees between,
Like flash of casque and spear when warriors ride.
Sweet Cherwell's waters edge the nearer side—
The sleepy cattle seek a shady screen,
For 'tis still sultry noon ; the martin wheels,
Like a black spirit of night haunting the day,
His phantom circles high in the upper blue ;
Shrill grasshopper clacks loud his whirring peals ;
Proud dragonflies glance by in armour new ;
And the bee hums her homeward roundelay.

J. B. NORTON.

MERTON LIBRARY

QUAINT gloomy chamber, oldest relic left
Of monkish quiet, like a ship thy form,
Stranded keel upward by some sudden storm ;
Now that a safe and polished age hath cleft
Locks, bars and chains, that saved thy tomes from theft,
May Time, a surer robber, spare thine age,
And reverence each huge black-lettered page,
Of real boards and gilt-stamped leather reft.
Long may ambitious students here unseal
The secret mysteries of classic lore ;
Though urged not by that blind and aimless zeal
With which the Scot within these walls of yore
Transcribed the Bible without breaking fast,
Toiled through each word and perished at the last.

J. B. NORTON.

IFFLEY CHURCH

From a Water-colour by P. DE WINT *in the University Galleries*

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SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT IFFLEY

HERE lie the quiet dead—gems buried deep
Beside the church antique that crowns the hill;
The ceaseless music of the water-mill
Sole requiem is of Love's enchanted sleep,
Sweet iris-beds a claustral silence keep
Save where, perchance, when all the fields are still
A nymph her lap with lilies shy may fill
Or watch the jocund fish in circles leap.

And far below the phantom city lies
Dreaming of life and dead philosophies;
While echoes of a thousand famous feet
That sometime trod her grey majestic street
(Where laughing youth hath fixed his ageworn seat)
Float o'er her from a cloud of centuries.

A. R. BAYLEY.

Oxford Magazine, June 1897.

ABOVE BABLOCKHYTHE

WHERE to the north a silent sentinel
Of Wessex upland spreads his bastion wide,
Low-browed, and circled by the silver tide
Of Thames, I gazed across the hedgerows tall,
O'er meadow, nestling hamlet, lordly hall
To far off climbing spire and cherished pride
Of storied home. As on a Roman bride,
Midday did cast a veil ambrosial
Of yellow flame, and fringed the vernal blush
Of Nature, reawakening from dull sleep
To new impassioned life. The love-light shone
Beneath her half-oped lips and thro' the hush
Of passing slumber gently I heard creep
A myriad murmur, like the voice of one.

ANONYMOUS.

Oxford Magazine, March 1896.

SNAKE'S-HEAD LILIES IN IFFLEY MEADS

WHEN that old serpent Thames, with subtle mood
Infected all the meads through which he wound,
That so these flowers upspringing from the ground
Should set their heads for striking; Nature, good
And innocent, o'erpowered the venomous brood;
About the forkéd tongues she deftly bound
Six golden tongues of birds that make sweet sound,
And gave the lily's bell for viper's hood.
Yet somewhat of the serpent still they show,
Emblems they are of immortality:
I pluck them, but mine eyes are filled with tears;
Within their mottled shells my memory hears
An echo of the days that cannot die
Where Iffley's meads with blossom overflow.

H. D. RAWNSLEY (1890).

IN WYTHAM WOODS

SEE how the hill-ascending beeches flush
A sunset radiance, and their neighbour elms
Gleam yellow-rich like gold ! a breathless hush
Of calm expectance fills these woody realms.

For whom this gold and purple ? whose proud wing
Shall brush yon carpet of stretched gossamer ?
Not Love's—I know—for she must wait till spring,
Nor are such courtly colours dear to her.

Not Love's—for sadness through the leaves doth peer,
Crooning old echoes of her poets' mood ;
And quavering speech of age seems fitter here
Than mirthful voices wakening the wood.

Who comes with pomp and sadness ? Death alone.
O come then, Death, with hope to share thy throne.

W. J. FERRAR (1892).

THE SHELLEY MEMORIAL

ABOVE him hangs a sapphire-coloured dome
Superb with stars; but through the rifted floor
Breaks, like eternity—his metaphor—
The light beyond. We envy not dead Rome
His little dust: for here—by fire and foam
Twice purged from every stain of mortal wrong,
Th' imperishable soul of passionate song
Even thy spirit, O Shelley, finds a home!

Here through the ages, shall thy shrine be shown;
Here, vindicated, on thy pyre sublime
Lifted above the ebb and flow of time,
The world shall pay thee homage, and shall own
More strong than privilege and power and pride,
Genius—of all her martyrs justified.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE.

IN THE BOTANIC GARDENS AT OXFORD

O WHAT an Iliad of hopes and fears
More fierce than any fought with spear and lance—
O what an Odyssey of sheer romance
My own past life, in retrospect, appears!
Now, as the tumult dies and the air clears,
I see myself—no thrall of Fate or Chance—
But girt around in every circumstance
As any god-led hero of ancient years.

Full thirty times into this placid stream
The drooping boughs have shed their prickly store,
Since first I dreamt here of the days to come:—
What though I cannot tell what measure more
May be assigned me—these still moments seem
To whisper that I am not far from home.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE.

OXFORD LIFE

Oxoniam quare venisti premeditare,
Nocte dieque cave tempus consumere prave.
On a pane of glass at Merton.

If learning you neglecte, in age
You will crie, "Ah! Alas!
"Why did I not to studie sticke
In childhood while I was?"
TIMOTHY KENDALL (1577).

He stops his course and with permission
Asking his name, sets imposition,
Which to get done, if he's a ninny,
He gives his barber half-a-guinea.
This useful go-between will share it
With servitor in college garret.
From "A Description of Oxford," 1770.

Golfers resume their caddies and their clubs,
Greats men their Plato, History men their Stubbs
Perspiring oarsmen ply the straining oar,
And learning smiles upon her sons once more.
A. GODLEY.

Mane bibendo, nocte studendo perdis ocellos;
Da mihi quaeso pocula sero, mane libellos.
ANON.

THE CLERK OF OXFORD

A CLERK there was of Oxenford also,
That un-to logik hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he was not right fat, I undertake,
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.
Ful thred-bar was his overest courtepy ; *
For he had geten him yet no benefyce,
Ne was so worldly for to have offyce.
For him was lever have † at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,
Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrye.
But al be that he was a philosophre
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre ;
But al that he mighte of his freendes hente,‡
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf him wher-with to scoleye.
Of studie took he most care and most hede,
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quik, and ful of hy sentence.
Souninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

G. CHAUCER.

From "The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales."

* Upper short coat. † He would rather have. ‡ Acquire.

A POOR SCHOLAR'S ROOMS

WHYLOM ther was dwellinge at Oxenford
A riche quof,* that gestes heeld to bord,†
And of his craft he was a Carpenter.
With him ther was dwellinge a poure scoler,
Had lerned art, but al his fantasye
Was turned for to lerne astrologye,
And coude a certeyn of conclusiouns
To demen by interrogaciouns,
If that men axed him in certain houres,
Whan that men sholde have droghte or elles shoures,
Or if men axed him what sholde bifalle
Of every thing, I may nat rekene him alle.
This clerk was cleped hende‡ Nicholas;
Of derne§ love he coude and of solas;
And therto he was sleigh and full privee,
And lyk a mayden meke for to see.
A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
Allone, withouten any companye,
Ful fetisly y-dight with herbes swote;
And he himselfe as swete as is the rote
Of licorys or any cetewale.‖
His Almageste and bokes grete and smale,
His astrelabie, longinge for his art,
His augrim¶ -stones layen faire a-part
On shelves couched at his beddes heed;
His presse y-covered with a falding reed.
And al above ther lay a gay sautrye,**
On which he made a nightes melodye,
So swetely that al the chambre rong;
And *angelus ad virginem* he song;

* Churl. † *I.e.*, took in boarders. ‡ Courteous. § Secret.
‖ An aromatic root. ¶ Numeration. ** Harp.

And after that he song the kinges note ;
Ful often blessed was his mery throte.
And thus this swete clerk his tyme spente
After his freendes finding and his rente.

G. Chaucer.
Opening of "The Miller's Tale."

THE SCHOLAR'S POOR REWARD

WHEN first the college rolls receive his name
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;
Through all his veins the fever of renown
Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread
And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.
Are these thy views? Proceed, illustrious youth,
And Virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth!
Yet should thy soul indulge the generous heat
Till captive Science yields her last retreat,
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day,
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;
Should Beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart
Nor claim the triumph of a lettered heart;
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade
Nor Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man reversed for thee,
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes
And pause awhile from Letters, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron and the gaol,
See nations, slowly wise and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust;
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend
Here Lydiat's life and Galileo's end.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (Pembroke College), 1709–84.

From "The Vanity of Human Wishes."

NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL AND TOWER AND THE CITY WALL

Drawn by BUCKLER *and engraved by* LEWIS

T o face p. 156

OXFORD NIGHTS

ABOUT the august and ancient Square,
Cries the wild wind ; and through the air,
The blue night air, blows keen and chill ;
Else, all the night sleeps, all is still.
Now, the lone Square is blind with gloom ;
Now on that clustering chestnut bloom,
A cloudy moonlight plays and falls
In glory upon Bodley's walls ;
Now, wildlier yet, while moonlight pales,
Storm the tumultuary gales.
O rare divinity of Night !
Season of undisturbed delight ;
Glad interspace of day and day !
Without, a world of winds at play,
Within I hear what dead friends say.
Blow winds ! and round that perfect Dome,
Wail as you will, and sweep, and roam ;
Above St. Mary's carven home
Struggle and smite to your desire
The sainted watchers on her spire ;
Or in the distance vex your power
Upon mine own New College tower.
You hurt not these ! On me and mine
Clear candlelights in quiet shine.
My fire lives yet ! nor have I done
With Smollett nor with Richardson ;
With, gentlest of the martyrs, Lamb,
Whose lover I, long lover, am ;
With Gray, whose gracious spirit knew
The sorrows of art's lonely few,
With Fielding, great and strong and tall,
Sterne, exquisite, equivocal,

Goldsmith, the dearest of them all;
While Addison's demure delights
Turn Oxford, into Attic, nights.
Still Trim and Parson Adams keep
Me better company than sleep;
Dark sleep, who loves not me; nor I
Well love her nightly death to die,
And in her haunted chapels lie.
Sleep wins me not; but from his shelf
Brings me each wit his very self.
Beside my chair the great ghosts throng,
Each tells his story, sings his song;
And in the ruddy fire I trace
The curves of each Augustan face.
I sit at Doctor Primrose' board
I hear Beau Tibbs discuss a lord.
Mine Matthew Bramble's pleasant wrath,
Mine all the humours of the Bath.
Sir Roger and the Man in Black
Bring me the Golden Ages back.
Now white Clarissa meets her fate,
With virgin will inviolate,
Now Lovelace wins us with a smile,
Lovelace, adorable and vile.
I taste, in slow alternate way,
Letters of Lamb, letters of Gray,
Nor lives there, beneath Oxford towers,
More joy than in my silent hours.
Dream, who loves dreams! forget all grief;
Find, in sleep's nothingness, relief:
Better my dreams! Dear human books,
With kindly voices, winning looks!
Enchant me with your spells of art,

And draw me homeward to your heart,
Till weariness and things unkind
Seem but a vain and passing wind ;
Till the grey morning slowly creep
Upward, and rouse the birds from sleep ;
Till Oxford bells the silence break
And find me happier, for your sake.
Then, with the dawn of common day,
Rest you ! But I, upon my way,
What the Fates bring, will cheerlier do,
In days not yours, through thoughts of you.

LIONEL JOHNSON (1890).

THE MARRIED EX-FELLOW'S REGRETS

WHY did I sell my college life
(He cries) for benefice and wife?
Return, ye days, when endless pleasure
I found in reading, or in leisure!
When calm around the common-room
I puffed my daily pipe's perfume!
Rode for a stomach and inspected,
At annual bottlings, corks selected,
And dined untaxed, untroubled under
The portrait of our pious Founder!
When impositions were supplied
To light my pipe—or soothe my pride—
No cares were then for forward peas,
A yearly-longing wife to please;
My thoughts no christening-dinners crossed
No children cried for buttered toast?
And every night I went to bed
Without a Modus in my head!

T. WARTON (1746).

From "The Progress of Discontent."

THE DON FIN DE SIÈCLE

THE days of port and peace are gone,
I am a modern Oxford Don ;
No more I haunt the candled gloom,
The cosy chairs of Common-Room ;
No more the senior man discourses,
Of wine, of women fair and horses,
Tells with cracked voice and mellow pride
Old stories of the covert-side,
Or with sad sigh dim forms recalls
Whose grey slabs line the cloister walls.
Student and hunter both are fled,
All their age is "lapped in lead."
Each day the peal of marriage bells
Tradition's gathered mist dispels ;
Our life's more complex daily grown,
And no man calls his soul his own.
Myself, a man of modest mark,
Make my snug nest beyond the Park,
Pay twice the rent my means afford,
Spread the too hospitable board,
And take each post the gods will give
To multiply the ways to live.
Each new device earns hearty greeting ;
I lecture to the Summer Meeting ;
Of each new school I know the ways
And keep in touch with each new craze.
No time for learning (Ah the pity !)
I spend whole days upon Committee ;
Vacation takes a reading party
To Marazion or Cromarty.
On every stage of life I'm seen,
At Toynbee Hall or Bethnal Green ;

To-day for County Council standing,
To-morrow Volunteers commanding ;
The time I spare from Caucus voting
I give to Company promoting,
Write leaders for the "Daily Rag"
And pen cheap satire for the "Mag.,"
My soul from donnishness deliver
And feign a passion for the river ;
With wise discretion spare the rod
And build the bonfire in the quad.
With borrowed lights from Teuton lore,
The past, the future I explore;
And make an easy reputation
By drafts on that laborious nation.
In Wren I see the source of evil,
Do my own coaching for the "Civil,"
With good spoon-meat (Heaven help the fools !)
I feed my pupils for the Schools :
Choked with the stodgy stuff I cram in 'em,
They face their fate and I examine 'em,
Devise new ways to find them out
And my own labours lightly flout.
Meanwhile, the long-expected tome,
"Plato," "Thucydides" or "Rome,"
The book to justify my claim
To Thinker's or Historian's name,
As Horace bids, suppressed nine years,
Ever appearing ne'er appears ;
When the fine fruit of toil is ripe,
At last emerges from the type
The small edition (hardy annual !)
The "Outline" or "Extension Manual,"

For Cambridge scoff or German jest,
Ohne Bedeutung at the best.
"And what's the end?" Ah, there's the riddle,
I break my sermon in the middle.

ANONYMOUS.
Oxford Magazine, 1894

OXFORD LIFE IN 1620

I WAS so happy to that Foard I came,
Which of the labouring Oxe doth bear the name.
It is a Spring of knowledge, that imparts
A thousand severall Sciences and Arts,
A pure, clear Fount, whose water is by odds
Farre sweeter than the Nectar of the Gods,
Or rather (truly to entitle it)
It is the wholesome nurcery of Wit.
There once arrived, in yeeres and knowledge raw,
I fell to wondering at each thing I saw ;
And from my learning made a month's Vacation,
In noting of the place's situation :
The Palaces and Temples that were due
Unto the wise Minerva's hallowed crew,
Their Cloysters, Walks and Groves ; all which surveyed
And in my new admittance well apaid,
I did (as other idle Freshmen doe)
Long to goe see the Bell of Osney too.
And yet for certainty I cannot tell
That e'er I drank at Aristotle's well.
And that, perhaps, may be the reason why
I know so little in Philosophy.
Yet old Sir Harry Bath was not forgot,
In the remembrance of whose wondrous shot
The Forest by (believe it they that will)
Was named Shot-over, as we call it still.
But having this experience, and withall
Achieved some cunning at the Tennis-ball ;
My Tutor (telling me I was not sent
To have my time there vaine and idly spent)
From childish humours gently called me in,
And with his grave instructions did begin

To teach ; and by his good persuasions sought
To bring me to a love of what he taught.
Then after that he laboured to impart
The hidden secrets of the Logick Art ;
Instead of Grammar Rules he read me then
Old Scotus, Seton and new Keckerman.
He shewed me which the Predicables be,
As Genus, Species, and the other three.
So having said enough of their contents,
Handles in order the ten Praedicaments ;
Next Post-Praedicamenta with Priorum,
Perhermenias and Posteriorum.
He with the Topickes opens and descries
Elenchi, full of subtle fallacies ;
These to unfold (indeed) he took much paine,
But to my dull capacity in vaine,
For all he spake was to as little passe
As, in old time, unto the vulgar was
The Latine Masse, which (whether bad or good)
The poore unlearned never understood.
For I his meaning did no more conjecture
Than if he had been reading Hebrew Lecture.
His Infinites, Individuities,
Contraries and Sub-contrarieties,
Divisions, Sub-divisions and a crew
Of tearms and words, such as I never knew,
My shallow understanding so confounded
That I was gravelled, like a ship that's grounded.
And in despaire the mysterie to gaine,
Neglecting all, took neither heed nor paine,
Yea, I remained in that amazed plight
Till Cynthia six times lost her borrowed light.
But then, ashamed to find myself still mute

THE MODISH WAY
(TO A FRIEND IN LONDON)

WELL dost thou ask me in thy friendly lays
How in this factious place I spend my days.
Why briefly thus :—As is the modish way,
Seldom I read, and much more seldom pray.
Logick I like not, that mechanick art,
To prove the whole is greater than a part.
Divinity and Law alike displease;
In short, I love my bottle and my ease.
The tenor of a College life I keep,
Eat thrice a day, pun, smoke, get drunk and sleep.

NICHOLAS AMHERST (St. John's Coll., 1718).

CARFAX CONDUIT AND ST. ALDATES

Drawn by J. DONOWELL *and engraved by* SKELTON

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THE LOUNGER

I RISE about nine, get to breakfast by ten,
Blow a tune on my flute, or perhaps make a pen ;
Read or play till eleven, or, cock my laced hat,
Then step to my neighbour's, till dinner, to chat.
Dinner over, to Tom's or to James's I go
The news of the town so impatient to know,
While Law, Locke and Newton and all the queer race,
That talk of their modes, their ellipses, and space,
The seat of the soul, and new systems on high,
In holes, as abstruse as their mysteries, lie.
From the coffee-house then I to tennis away,
And at five I post back to my college to pray ;
I sup before eight, and secure from all duns,
Undauntedly march to the Mitre or Tuns ;
Where in punch or good claret my sorrows I drown,
And toss off a bowl "To the best in the town."
At one in the morning I call what's to pay,
Then home to my college I stagger away,
There I tope all the night as I trifle all day.

From "The Oxford Sausage."

THE OXFORD SMART IN 1767

FRESH from the schools, behold an Oxford smart,
No dupe to science, no dull slave of art;
As to our dress, faith, Ladies! to say truth,
It is a little awkward and uncouth;
No sword, cockade, to lure you to our arms—
But then this airy tassel hath its charms.
What mortal Oxford laundress can withstand
This, and the graces of a well-starched band?
In this array, our spark, with winning air,
Boldly accosts the froth-compelling fair;
Fast by the tub, with folded arms he stands
And sees his surplice whiten in her hands,
And as she dives into the soapy floods,
Wishes almost—himself were in the suds.
Sometimes the car he drives impetuous on,
Cut, lash and flash, a very Phaethon,
Swift as the fiery coursers of the sun
Up hill and down, his raw-boned hackneys run,
Leaving, with heat half-dead, and dust half-blind,
Turnpikes and bawling hosts unpaid behind.
You think, perhaps, we read—perhaps we may—
The news, a pamphlet, or the last new play;
But for the scribblers of the Augustan Age,
Horace and such queer mortals—not a page;
His brilliant sterling wit we justly hold
More brilliant far, transformed to sterling gold.
Though Euclid we digest without much pain
And solve his problems into brisk champaign.
Fired with this juice—why let the Proctor come,
"Young men, 'tis late—'tis time you were at home."
"Zounds! are you here," we cry, "with your dull rules,

Like Banquo's ghost, to push us from our stools."
Such are the studies smarts pursue at college,
Oh, we are great proficients in such knowledge.

Gentleman's Magazine, Nov. 1767.

[Prologue to "The Oxonian in Town," played at Covent Garden, 1767, spoken by Mr. Woodward, in the character of a Gentleman Commoner, in his academical habit.]

THE IDLE HOUR

UNRESTRAINED I rove
At large, and riot in successive rounds
Of new delight. Now up the silver stream
To Medley's bowers, or Godstowe's famed retreat,
Straining each nerve, I urge the dancing skiff,
Or, rushing headlong down the perilous steep
Rouse the sly Reynard from his dark abode;
Or, if inclement vapours load the sky,
Tennis awhile the heavy hours beguiles;
Or, at the billiards fatal board, I stake,
With anxious heart, the last sad remnant coin.

From "The Oxonian," 1778.
In imitation of "The Splendid Shilling."

THE FRESHMAN

WHEN first the Freshman, bashful, blooming, young—
Blessings which here attend not handmaids long—
Assumes that cap, which franchises the man,
And feels beneath the gown dilate his span ;
When he has stood with modest glance, shy fear,
And stiff starched band before our Grand Vizier,
And sworn to articles he scarcely knew,
And forsworn doctrines to his creed all new ;
Through fancy's painted glass he fondly sees
Monastic turrets, patriarchal trees,
The cloistral arches' awe-inspiring shade,
The High Street sonnetised by Wordsworth's jade,
His raptured view a paradise regards,
Nurseling of hope ! he builds on paper cards.

"BERNARD BLACKMANTLE" (C. M. WESTMACOTT).
In "The English Spy," 1825.

THE FRESHMAN'S SONG

AT Oxford a Freshman so modest
I entered one morning in March,
The figure I cut was the oddest
All purity, stockings and starch.

From the box of the Royal Defiance,
Jack Adams, who coaches so well,
Dropped me down in that region of Science
In front of the Mitre Hotel.

"Sure never man's prospects were brighter,"
Cried I, as I dropped from my perch,
"So quickly arrived at the Mitre,
"I am sure to get on in the Church."

I breakfasted twice with my Tutor
On stale bread and butter and tea,
And felt myself proud as a suitor
Enthroned on his mistress' knee.

At Woodstock a dear little glover,
Attracted the course of my rides;
And if she liked me as a lover,
I loved her with fifty besides.

[*A fragment of a song popular in Oxford about* 1830.]

STUDIOUS PRINCES AT QUEEN'S

IN that coarse age were Princes * fond to dwell
With meagre monks and haunt the silent cell ;
Sent from the monarch's to the Muses' court,
Their meals were frugal and their sleeps were short.
To couch at curfew-time they thought no scorn,
And froze at matins, every winter morn ;
They read, an early book, the starry frame,
And lisped each constellation by its name ;
Art after art still dawning to their view,
And their mind opening as their stature grew.

T. TICKELL (1733).

From his verses "On Her Majesty's rebuilding the Lodgings of the Black Prince and Henry V. at Queen's Coll., Oxford."

* *I.e.*, Edward the Black Prince and Henry V.

THE BOAR'S HEAD SONG

THE Boar's head in hand bear I
Bedecked with Bays and Rosemary.
And I pray you, my masters, merry be yee,
Quot estis in Convivio,
Caput Apri defero, reddens laudes Domino.

The Boar's Head, as I understand,
Is the bravest dish in all the land,
And thus bedecked with a gay garland,
Let us *servire Cantico*
Caput Apri defero, reddens laudes Domino.

In memory of ye King of Bliss
Which on this day to be served is
In Reginensi Atrio
Caput Apri defero, reddens laudes Domino.

[This song is always sung by the choir at dinner in Queen's College Hall on Christmas Day. The Boar's Head is brought in on a great silver dish.]

THE BOAR'S HEAD

I SING not of Roman or Grecian mad games,
The Pythian, Olympic, and such like hard names;
Your patience awhile with submission I beg,
I strive but to honour the feast of Coll. Reg.
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

No Thracian brawls at our rites e'er prevail,
We temper our mirth with plain sober mild ale,
The tricks of old Circe deter us from wine,
Tho' we honour a Boar, we don't make ourselves swine.

Great Milo was famous for slaying his ox,
Yet he proved but an ass in cleaving of blocks,
But we had a hero for all things was fit,
Our motto displays both his valour and wit.

Stout Hercules laboured and looked mighty big,
When he slew the half-starved Erymanthian pig,
But we can relate such a stratagem taken,
That the stoutest of Boars could not save his own bacon.

So dreadful this bristle-backed foe did appear,
You'd have sworn he had got the wrong pig by the ear,
But instead of avoiding the mouth of the beast,
He rammed in a volume and cried—*Graecum est.*

In this gallant action such fortitude shewn is,
As proves him no coward, nor tender Adonis,
No armour but logic, by which we may find,
That logic's the bulwark of body and mind.

Ye squires, that fear neither hills nor rough rocks,
And think you're full wise, when you outwit a fox,
Enrich your poor brains, and expose them no more,
Learn Greek and seek glory from hunting the Boar.
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

From "The Oxford Sausage."

THE MALLARD SONG AT ALL SOULS

GRIFFIN, Turkey, Bustard, Capon
Let other hungry mortalls gape on,
And on their bones with stomacks fall hard
But let All Souls men have the mallard.
Hough the blood of King Edward, by ye blood of King Edward,
It was a swapping, swapping mallard.

Stories strange were told, I trow,
By Baker, Holinshead, and Stow,
Of Cocks and Bulls and other queer things
That were done in the Reignes of their Kings.
Hough the blood of King Edward, by ye blood of King Edward,
It was a swapping, swapping mallard.

The Romans once admired a gander
More than they did their Chiefe Commander,
Because it saved, if some don't foole us,
The place called from the head of Tolus.
Hough the blood of King Edward, by ye blood of King Edward,
It was a swapping, swapping mallard.

The poets feigned Jove turned a swan,
But let them prove it, if they can,
As for our prose, 'tis not at all hard
That 'twas a swapping, swapping mallard.
Hough the blood of King Edward, by ye blood of King Edward,
It was a swapping, swapping mallard.

Then let us sing and dance a galliard
To the remembrance of the mallard,
And as the mallard does in Poole
Let's dabble, dive and duck in Bowle.
Hough the blood of King Edward, by ye blood of King Edward,
It was a swapping, swapping mallard.

[The mallard feast used to be held within a night or two of All Souls Day. Six electors nominated the Lord of the Mallard, who paid all expenses. The Lord in turn appointed six officers, who marched before him carrying white staves and medals with blue ribbons on their breasts. The Lord himself was carried, seated in a chair, round the quadrangle three times; the song was sung; and then those who formed the procession knocked at the doors of the senior men and demanded crown pieces. Afterwards all, carrying torches, went up to the college roof and sang the song again, and then dispersed to their rooms and drank. Later on, they adjourned to the buttery and filled tumblers of Canary wine, into which a few drops of a mallard's blood were squeezed, after its head had been struck off. The story was that the remains of a mallard had been dug up in a drain during some excavations for new buildings at All Souls.]

ORIEL GRACE CUP SONG

EXULTET mater Oriel in imis penetratibus,
Nunc tempus honestissimis vacare saturnalibus,
Nunc versibus canendum est Latinis et Ionicis!
Nunc audiendum vatibus, ut mihi, Macaronicis.
Sing then all true men, from pulpit, bar or quorum,
Floreat Oriel in saecula saeculorum.

Quem mos delectat veterum, cui Oriel sit curae,
Occasioni faveat non nobis reventurae,
Man's race is short, alas! To the coffin from the nursery
Five ages more shall pass but with one such anniversary.

Πίνωμεν πάντες οὖν, compotemus O, sodales,
To the memory and renown of our Butlers and our Raleighs,
And to the sages yet unborn, *insignissimis virtute*
Who old Oriel shall adorn when our bones have done their duty.

To our noble head and fellows true, let's drink a health and blessing,
ὅι ἡῦν ∂έχονται ἥμᾶς ἐῦ καὶ καλοῖς ∂επάεσσιν;
Sit placens uxor singulis et res abunda domi,
Per ora volet usque laus et recordatio Bromi.

Old and famous is our college, sirs, as Romulus and Remus,
A stately tree of knowledge, sirs, from groves of Academus,
Just once a century it flowers, then *more antiquorum*,
We'll bask beneath its social bower and toast it in a jorum.

[Written by John Hughes, father of "Tom Brown" Hughes, at the Oriel Centenary dinner, Jan. 15, 1826. Published, with a few literal emendations, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, July 1826.]

THE OXFORD DUN

WITH looks demure and silent pace, a Dun,
Horrible monster! hated by gods and men,
To my aerial citadel ascends.
With vocal heel thrice thundering at my gate,
With hideous accent thrice he calls. I know
The voice ill-boding and the solemn sound.
What should I do? Or whither turn? Amazed,
Confounded, to the dark recess I fly
Of wood-hole. Straight my bristling hairs erect
Through sudden fear, a chilly sweat bedews
My shuddering limbs, and (wonderful to tell)
My tongue forgets her faculty of speech.
So horrible he seems! His faded brow
Entrenched with many a frown and conic beard,
And spreading band, admired by modern saints,
Disastrous acts forebode. In his right hand
Long scrolls of paper solemnly he waves,
With characters and figures dire inscribed,
Grievous to mortal eyes. Ye gods! avert
Such plagues from righteous men! Behind him stalks
Another monster, not unlike himself,
Sullen of aspect, by the vulgar called
A Catchpole, whose polluted hands the gods
With force incredible and magic charms
First have endued; if he his ample palm
Should haply on ill-fated shoulder lay
Of debtor, straight his body to the touch
Obsequious (as whilom knights were wont)
To some enchanted castle is conveyed,
Where gates impregnable, and coercive chains,
In durance strict detain him till, in form
Of money, Pallas sets the captive free. J. PHILIPS.

From "The Splendid Shilling."

PICTURE OF THE COMFORTS OF A PROFESSOR'S ROOMS IN C. C. C. OXFORD

AWAY, ye ignorant and vain !
Away, ye faithless and profane !
Jesters and dainty dandies, fly hence,
But enter thou, dear son of Science !
And here, in wild disorder hurled,
Behold an emblem of the world,
In that chaotic state of old
When flints in Paramoudras rolled !
Here see the wrecks of beasts and fishes
With broken saucers, cups and dishes ;
The prae-Adamic systems jumbled,
With Sublapsaria brecchia tumbled,
And post-Noachian bears and flounders,
With heads of crocodiles and founders ;
Skins wanting bones, bones wanting skins,
And various blocks to break your shins.
No place is this for cutting capers,
Midst jumbled stones, and books and papers,
Stuffed birds, portfolios, packing-cases,
And founders fallen upon their faces.
He'll see upon the only chair
The great Professor's frugal fare,
And over all behold, *illatum*
Of dust a superficial *stratum*.
The sage amidst the chaos stands
Contemplative, with laden hands,
This, grasping tight his bread and butter,
And that a flint, whilst he doth utter
Strange sentences that seem to say ;—
"I see it all as clear as day ;
I see the mighty waters rush,

And down the solid barriers push !
I see the pebbles pebbles chasing
And scooping out of many a basin ;
I see the dreadful dislocation,
And gradual stratification."
His eye in a fine frenzy rolling,
He thus around the fragments strolling,
Still entertains a fond illusion
That all the strata's strange confusion
He shall explain beyond conjecture,
And clear in the ensuing lecture.

P. B. DUNCAN (May 1821).

Written of Dean Buckland's rooms in C.C.C. before he became a Canon of Ch. Ch.

From Prof. C. G. B. Daubeny's "Fugitive Poems connected with Nat. Hist. and Physical Science."

A WINE AT TRINITY IN 1792

NARRARE finished—and grace said—
Vice Pres. and Fellows take the lead
And march away to wine :
We in our turn their steps pursue,
Sen. Coms., A. B's., and Scholars too,
Where'er our steps incline.

For now some ten or dozen get
By pre-appointment in a set
To taste inviter's Port ;
He glasses, plates and spoons prepares,
Decanters, knives and forks and chairs,
But each his own desert.

For with large baskets enters soon
A wily fruiterer styled Baboon,
Who hands around his store ;
Apples and pears, and chestnuts too,
And oranges decked out to view,
With many a *bonne bouche* more.

Should guest from other college come
Of course the master of the room
Provides for his supply :
Our inmates carry to account
In fruiterer's book each day's amount
Of what they taste or buy.

Meanwhile the jovial toasts go round
The bottles jingle, glasses sound,
As each one drinks his fair ;
The Chairman watches, bawls and raps,
Should any fill upon heel taps
Or his good liquor spare.

At five the Chapel bell again
Rings a loud peal—but rings in vain
To move a single guest;
For while delighted they behold
Within all warm, without all cold,
Each loves fireside the best.

Time quickly passes, mirth and song
Do not the heavy hours prolong
Like misery and woe;
Whilst wit, like fuel in the grate,
Enlivens all, dull care must wait
Nor note how bumpers flow.

At six, dame Prudence well may see
It is high time to order tea
If Prudence have her eyes;
But Bacchus, sly enchanter, draws
Her hoodwinked captive to his laws,
In short, now none are wise.

For lo! they tea and coffee spurn,
Whilst unsnuffed candles dimly burn,
Some hiccough and some snore;
The Chairman vainly strives to speak
And mouths his English worse than Greek,
In short, the game is o'er.

At nine, the blinking Scout appears
Whilst most are nodding in their chairs
And bottles moves away;
For from the kitchen he has brought
What each one sober, might or ought
T' have ordered in his tray.

Boiled fowl, salt herrings, sausages,
Cold beef and brawn, and bread and cheese,
With tankards full of ale;
The sated guests he with delight
Counts o'er, for this his perquisite
Is, when their functions fail.

Although in some respect he earns
The solace of these good returns
For putting them to bed,
As many a curse, and many a kick,
And many a pinch and many a lick
They give while being led.

"Hush, Hush," cries Tom, across quadrangle—
In lanthorn stuck his two-inch candle—
The President will hear:
"Be quiet, sir, and come along,
I wish you would not pull so strong
Nor yet so loudly swear."

J. Skinner (1792).

IN SUMMER TIME TO MEDLEY

IN summer time to Medley,
My love and I would go ;
The boatmen there stood ready,
My love and I to row.
For cream there would we call,
For cakes and for prunes too ;
But now ; alas ! sh' 'as left me,
Falero, lero, loo.

Many a merry meeting
My love and I have had ;
She was my only sweeting,
She made my heart full glad.
The tears stood in her eyes,
Like to the morning dew ;
But now, alas ! sh' 'as left me
Falero, lero, loo.

Her cheeks were like the cherry,
Her skin as white as snow ;
When she was blithe and merry,
She angel-like did show.
Her waist exceeding small,
The fives did fit her shoe ;
But now, alas ! sh' 'as left me,
Falero, lero, loo.

In summer time or winter
She had her heart's desire ;
I still did scorn to stint her
From sugar, sack, or fire.
The world went round about
No cares we ever knew ;

But now, alas ! sh' 'as left me
Falero, lero, loo.

To maiden's vows and swearing
Henceforth no credit give ;
You may give them the hearing,
But never them believe.
They are as false as fair,
Unconstant, frail, untrue,
For mine, alas ! has left me
Falero, lero, loo.

If ever that Dame Nature,
For this false lover's sake,
Another pleasing creature
Like unto her should make ;
Let her remember this,
To make the other true ;
For this, alas ! hath left me
Falero, lero, loo.

No riches now can raise me,
No want make me despair,
No misery amaze me,
Nor yet for want I care.
I have lost a world itself,
My earthly heaven, adieu,
Since she, alas ! hath left me
Falero, lero, loo.

GEORGE WITHER.
1588–1667.

BEFORE THE EIGHTS

MID-May ! and the Eights are upon us, and looming already in sight
The vision of Schools that we look to with terror, yet half with delight,
To think that at last they'll be done with, and clad in a decent degree,
We shall laugh at our Tutors and leave them to "viva" themselves, and be free.
Yet 'tis pleasant to linger a moment, while May wears the glory of June,
And the fragrance of midsummer floats from the meadows, where sudden and soon
The flowers of several seasons have blossomed together in one,
Ragged robin andclover, and comfrey and sorrel ablaze in the sun.
What a Term ! was the cricket-field ever baked brown at so early a date ?
Or the river so shallow that scarce there is water to carry an Eight ?
Yet for sake of our sisters and cousins, some water no doubt will be found
To float us a week for the racing and save us from going aground.
For though Tutors be born with discussions to fix the foundation of Ford,
Though the Council is still in existence, and Delegates meet to be bored,
Though Professors, turned architects, lecture so learned on "gablet" and "squinch"
And explain how St. Mary's was built at the first to the tenth of an inch—

THE HIGH STREET

Drawn by J. M. W. TURNER *and engraved by* S. MIDDIMAN *and* J. PYE

To face p. 190

Still the pleasant May world will go gaily unheeding, and
bonnet and frock
Invade the Broad Walk and the Barges, and from Folly
Bridge down to the Lock
The stream will be crowded with faces as eager as ever
to see
If Magdalen keeps head of the river, or which will be
first of the three
That have struggled these years; and the shout will re-
echo from lungs that are strong
On the meadow, the bank and the Barges, and they will
be flashing along,
Those sixty-foot racers that throb to the stroke as the lilt
of a song.
So the race goes its way, and St. Mary's looks wistfully
down at the stream
She has loved through the ages, to wonder if scaffolds and
poles are a dream,
And Professors and pedants but shadows that pass as a
vapour and die,
To leave her unharmed and triumphant—the glorious
Queen of the High.

From "The Oxford Magazine," 1893.

PARSON'S PLEASURE

DO you remember that straight gravel-walk
Planted with may-trees leading to the river,
With sunny palisades? At dawn in June,
When we passed down to bathe, what scented showers
Of pink and crimson petals strewed our path!
Do you remember the old willow stump?
And how you swam (although I warned you not)
Far out and swimming, gathered water-lilies?
I feared the treacherous weeds might pull you down:
I seem to see you still, holding the buds
Above the stream, and toiling with one hand!
Ah! dear drenched head, dear laughter-flashing eyes,
How glad were you to grasp the steps again.
And I, too, swim far out to gather flowers:
And with one hand I toil, that I may hold
These buds of song above the stream of Death.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE.

A Section from "Charmides.

GODSTOW

AND once we rowed together up the river
To many-gated Godstow, where the stream
Splits, and upon a tongue of land there stands
An Inn with willow bowers :—it is a spot
Where still the flavour of old Merry England
Lingers : And softly flowed the silver Thames
Beside the garden, while we fed the fish.
There 'mid the twilight and the trellised roses
We sang the ballad of fair Rosamund :
And when at last we loosed the boat, we saw
Above the ruined Nunnery where she sleeps
A star : and from the reeds a mournful gust
Whispered and rippled round the shallow prow
And passed : and all was quiet. At that moment
The Mighty Mother touched me, and I felt
The first strong throb of that which rules me still.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE.

A Section from "Charmides."

AD AMICOS OXONIENSES

VERE, o mi Coryphaee amiculorum,
Rousaei gemini pares gemelli,
Stacte et lacte aliti piae Thaliae,
Tuque, o MORE pater joci salisque,
Praedulcis chorus Aeneique Nasi
Cycni pectora molliora plumâ,
O Vernone Phillippidesque chare,
Charior mihi pectoris medullâ,
Vosque o corda nivis colore tincta,
O Rashlaee, Bohune, tuque Traefri
Dum vos in media jocos Calaenâ
Dum risus veneresque captitatis,
Ille Fitzgeofridus ille vester
Nonnunquam lepidissimus sodalis,
Quocumque ludere, plaudere et jocari,
Ridere et bibere, et comesse suestis,
Tabescit misero improboque morbo,
Expectans properata quando Parca
Vitae stamina dissecet caducae.
At quos percoluit, pii sodales,
Apud vos cupit arrabonem amoris
Sui linquere, quam prius recedat.
En ipsam hanc animam polos petentem,
Vestrûm dividuam cuique tradit.
At negant streperi patres Lycaei
In ullas animam potesse partes
Dividi, solidamque et integellam.
Ergo ut diditur integros in artus
Toto corpore tota dum vigescit,
Sic totam hanc animam fidelem, amicam,
Unusquisque sodalium capessat,
Ad quos evolat impotens morari,

Polis posthabitis, poli et planetis,
Purique aetheris orbibus beatis.
Vos poli mihi, vos poli planetae,
Vos orbes mihi et aetheris beati.

CHARLES FITZ-GEOFFREY.
From "Assaniae," 1601.

AD AMICOS OXONIENSES

NOS licet abjungant tanta intervalla locorum,
Nec licet ut quondam colloquiis fruier ;
Vos tamen his oculis, vos hoc circumfero corde,
Vos mihi praesentes nocte dieque velim.
Ad corvos abeat pereatque immitis egestas,
Quae pergit nos tam dissociare diu.
Interea cari, fidique valete sodales,
Et vos sicut amo, me redamate, precor.
Utque brevi possim vos visere, sancta precabor
Numina ; Quando erit hic, o bone Christe, dies ?

JOHN PARKHURST (1573).

UNDERGRADUATE RECREATIONS IN 1660

NUNC adeas Vada Longa velim, quaque aspera surgi
Radlia, Bagliacaeque petas viridaria sylvæ.
Sed prius antiquum Bacconi trajicis arcum,
Tendentemque viam numeroso fornice calcas.
Huc postquam appulerit superatis undique clivis
Fessa gradum, summoque jugo planta ardua fulsit,
Protinus aspicitur puris Sandfordia rivis,
Gazaque, et a stabulis vaccarum Coulia dicta.
Tum laevi tumulo videas turgescere colles
Bullingtonenses, baculis ubi pulsa salignis
Saltibus indomitis tritas pila verberat herbas.*
Instat turba procul pisces superare natando,
Quae fluvii petit amplexus, et verbere molli
Tentatura undas, humeros denudat eburnos.
Ille recens secto gaudet se volvere faeno,
Perque suos nidos trepidas agitare cicadas.
Alter at in stagno ranas spectare natantes
Gestit et humanas imitantia membra figuras.
Ille diem facili gaudet producere risu
Fronde super fultus, placidosque recondere soles.
Tristior alter erit, dumque ad vaga flumina fertur
Virgilium, aut magni carmen memorabit Horati.
Hic saltu nitet, hic jacto secat aera disco,
Hic socium dura sudat detrudere luctu.
Non omnes unum studium rapit, undique venis
Dissimili pulsu sanguis micat, et trahit artus
Concordesque ferunt animos discordia vota.
Pars humiles texit calathos, atque ordine juncos †
Complicat, aut varias pingit sibi flore corollas.

* Play of stow-ball.
† Making Trimtrams with rushes and flowers.

Pars quoque gramineæ residens in margine ripae,
Non regressuros educit arundine pisces.
Quidam oculis lustrat rimans, qua lucius haeret
Fixus, et invigilat sociis latebrosus edendis.

F. Vernon (Ch. Ch., 1667).

SMITH OF MAUDLIN

MY chums will burn their Indian weeds
The very night I pass away,
And cloud-propelling puff and puff,
As white the thin smoke melts away ;
Then Jones of Wadham, eyes half closed,
Rubbing the ten hairs on his chin,
Will say, " This very pipe I use
Was poor old Smith's of Maudlin."

That night in High Street there will walk
The ruffling gownsmen three abreast,
The stiff-necked proctors, wary-eyed,
The dons, the coaches and the rest ;
Sly " Cherub Sims " will then propose
Billiards or some sweet ivory sin ;
Tom cries, " He played a pretty game,—
Did honest Smith of Maudlin."

The boats are out ! the arrowy rush,
The mad bull's jerk, the tiger's strength ;
The Balliol men have wopped the Queen's,—
Hurrah ! but only by a length.
Dig on, ye muffs ; ye cripples, dig !
Pull blind, till crimson sweats the skin ;
The man who bobs and steers cries, " O
For plucky Smith of Maudlin.

Wine parties met—a noisy night,
Red sparks are breaking through the cloud ;
The man who won the silver cup
Is in the chair erect and proud ;
Three are asleep—one to himself

Sings, "Yellow jacket's sure to win."
A silence ;—"Men, the memory
Of poor old Smith of Maudlin !"

The boxing-rooms,—with solemn air
A freshman dons the swollen glove ;
With slicing strokes the lapping sticks
Work out a rubber,—three and love ;
With rasping jar the padded man
Whips Thompson's foil, so square and thin,
And cries, "Why, Zur, you've not the wrist
Of Muster Smith of Maudlin."

But all this time beneath the sheet
I shall lie still, and free from pain,
Hearing the bed-makers sluff in
To gossip round the blinded pane ;
Try on my rings, snuff up my scent,
Feel in my pockets for my tin ;
While one hag says, "We all must die
Just like this Smith of Maudlin."

Ah ! then a dreadful hush will come,
And all I hear will be the fly,
Buzzing impatient on the wall,
And on the sheet where I must lie ;
Next day a jostling of feet,—
The men who bring the coffin in ;
"This is the door,—the third pair back,—
Here's Mr. Smith of Maudlin."

WALTER THORNBURY.

VACANT HOURS

COULD'ST thou reprove me, when I nursed the flame
On listening Cherwell's osier banks reclined?
While, foe to Fortune, unseduced by Fame,
I soothed the bias of a careless mind?

Youth's gentle kindred, Health and Love, were met;
What though in Alma's guardian arms I played?
How shall the Muse those vacant hours forget?
Or deem that bliss by solid cares repaid?

W. SHENSTONE.

THE ISIS AND CHERWELL

And eke Thame somewhat seemed to stoupe afore
With bowed backe, by reason of the lode
And auncient heavy burden which he bore
Of that fair City, wherein make abode
So many learned impes, that shoote abrode,
And with their branches spred all Britany,
No lesse then do her elder Sisters broode.
Joy to you both, ye double Nursery
Of Arts! but, Oxford, thine doth Thame most glorify.

EDMUND SPENSER.

Wild rose we have, and traveller's-joy,
And round our prow a lily crown,
With meadowsweet about our feet,
As we row back to Oxford town.

L. H.
Oxford Magazine, 1883.

THAMES AND ISIS

THE famous River Isis hath her spring
Neare Tetbury and downe along doth bring
(As hand-maids) to attend her progress, Churne,
Colne, Windrush, Yenload, Leech, whose windings
turne
And Meads and Pastures trims, bedecks and dresses,
Like an unvaluable chaine of Esses.
After releese of many a Ducke and Goose,
At Saint John's Bridge they make their rendevous,
And there like robbers crossing London way,
Bid many a barefoot Welshman wade or stay,
Close under Oxford, one of England's eyes,
Chief of the chiefest Universities.
From Banbury, desirous to add knowledge
To zeal, and to be taught in Magdalen College,
The River Cherwell doth to Isis runne
And bears her company to Abington.

JOHN TAYLOR (The Water-Poet, 1632).

THE MARRIAGE OF THAME AND ISIS

THE guests here to the bride-house hie.
The goodly vale of Aylesbury
Sets her son (Thame) forth, brave as May,
Upon the joyful wedding-day ;
Who, decked up, towards his bride is gone.
So lovely Isis coming on,
At Oxford all the Muses meet her,
And with a Prothalamion greet her.
The nymphs are in the bridal bowers,
Some strowing sweets, some sorting flowers ;
Where lusty Charwel himself raises,
And sings of rivers and their praises.
Then Thames his way towards Windsor tends,
Thus, with the song, the marriage ends.

M. DRAYTON.

Argument to the 15th Song of the "Polyolbion."

INDOLENCE

WE left the city when the summer day
Had verged already on its hot decline,
And charmèd Indolence in languor lay
In her gay gardens, 'neath her towers divine :
" Farewell," we said, " dear city of youth and dream ! "
And in our boat we stepped and took the stream.

All through that idle afternoon we strayed
Upon our proposed travel well begun,
As loitering by the woodland's dreamy shade,
Past shallow islets floating in the sun,
Or searching down the banks for rarer flowers
We lingered out the pleasurable hours.

Till when the loveliest came, which mowers home
Turns from their longest labour, as we steered
Along a straightened channel flecked with foam,
We lost our landscape wide and slowly neared
An ancient bridge, that like a blind wall lay
Low on its buried vaults to block the way.

Then soon the narrow tunnels broader showed,
Where, with its arches three it sucked the mass
Of water, that in swirl thereunder flowed,
Or stood piled at the piers waiting to pass ;
And pulling for the middle span, we drew
The tender blades aboard and floated through.

But past the bridge what change we found below !
The stream that all day long had laughed and played
Betwixt the happy shires, ran dark and slow,
And with its easy flood no murmur made ;
And weeds spread on its surface and about
The stagnant margin reared their stout heads out.

Upon the left high elms, with giant wood
Skirting the water-meadows, interwove
Their slumbrous crowns, o'ershadowing where they stood
The floor and heavy pillars of the grove ;
And in the shade, through reeds and sedges dank,
A footpath led along the moated bank.

Across, all down the right, an old brick wall,
Above and o'er the channel, red did lean ;
Here buttressed up, and bulging there to fall,
Tufted with grass and plants and lichen green ;
And crumbling to the flood, which at its base
Slid gently, nor disturbed its mirrored face.

Sheer on the wall the houses rose, their backs
All windowless, neglected and awry,
With tottering coins, and crooked chimney stacks ;
And here and there an unused door, set high
Above the fragments of its mouldering stair,
With rail and broken step led out on air.

Beyond deserted wharfs and vacant sheds,
With empty boats and barges moored along,
And rafts half sunken, fringed with weedy shreds,
And sodden beams, once soaked to season strong.
No sight of man, nor sight of life, no stroke,
No voice the somnolence and silence broke.

Then I who rowed leant on my oar, whose drip
Fell without sparkle and I rowed no more ;
And he that steered moved neither hand nor lip,
But turned his wandering eye from shore to shore ;
And our trim boat let her swift motion die,
Between the dim reflections floating by.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

LAST MAY-DAY

MAY-DAY is gone, we go on different ways,
This the last of all our old May-days;
But, separate or together, scarce our feet
Will find another pathway quite so sweet.
Then, since it is the last time, let me sing
As to the music of your listening;
O gold and ivory flower of perfect face
Born in some distant sun-replenished place!
O myrrh and cinnamon, whose vapour rolled
Around the seven sacred lamps of gold!

Will you remember, as the days go on,
The trees that budded and the fields that shone,
While overhead the burning afternoon
Glowed as if May had caught the heart of June,
And filled the curving river-spaces lone
With scent of rose and hawthorn yet unblown?
Under strange softness as of southern skies
Spring paused and lingered with reverted eyes,
And in 'mid pulse and passion of the year
Stayed for a moment's flight, that earth might hear
In all her windy heights and hollow vales
The sweet sad echo of last year's nightingales;
Might hear the undistinguishable sea,
Might feel hot scent of thyme abundantly
On downs where utmost August burned the wheat
And blood-red poppies faint with heavy heat.

So swiftly with the swift descending day
The river's coils unwound and gave us way;
Where westward lay the level meads unrolled
Made multitudinous with marsh-marigold.

And evermore the boat's swift stride outran
The ripple of the wavering water wan ;
The banks drew backward and the ripple spread ;
The light spray from the oar-blades diamonded
The sleeping water, where the lilies grew
Tall golden-green among the gold-shot blue.
Thus we sped onward as the sun drew down
And passed the willows and drew near the town.
Deep in the east a single planet pale
Glimmered against the misty purple veil,
Where many bells at once began to ring.
And so we parted about lamplighting,
And the sweet day was dead ; and from afar
Calm and disconsolate the evening star
Trembled south-westward in a grey-green sky
Where yet the last dim orange lingeringly
Glowed faint and fainter ; then the darkness fell
Fold upon fold, till hardly visible
The spires stood out against the starlit night,
The heaven of heavens stood open to the sight
Bared for a space ; and softly over all
Low sound went echoing like the plash and fall
Of breaking waves upon a moonlit strand
In some forgotten and forgetful land.

J. W. MACKAIL (Balliol College),
Professor of Poetry.

NIGHT FALL IN THE VALLEY

IT was a dream, the glade is tenantless,
No soft Ionian laughter moves the air,
The Thames creeps on in sluggish leadenness,
And from the copse left desolate and bare
Fled is young Bacchus with his revelry,
Yet still from Nuneham Wood there comes that thrilling melody.

So sad, that one might think a human heart
Brake in each separate note, a quality
Which Music sometimes has, being the Art
Which is most nigh to tears and memory,
Poor mourning Philomel, what dost thou fear?
Thy sister doth not haunt these fields, Pandion is not here.

Here is no cruel Lord with murderous blade,
No woven web of bloody heraldries,
But mossy dells for roving comrades made,
Warm valleys where the tired student lies,
With half-shut book, and many a winding walk
Where rustic lovers stray at eve in happy simple talk.

The harmless rabbit gambols with its young
Across the trampled towing-path, where late
A troop of laughing boys in jostling throng
Cheered with their noisy cries the racing eight;
The gossamer, with ravelled silver threads,
Works at his little loom, and from the dusky red-eaved sheds

Of the lone Farm a flickering light shines out
  Where the swinked shepherd drives his bleating flock
Back to their wattled sheep-cotes ; a faint shout
  Comes from some Oxford boat at Sandford lock,
And starts the moor-hen from the sedgy rill,
And the dim lengthening shadows flit like swallows up
    the hill.

The heron passes homeward to the mere,
  The blue mist creeps among the shivering trees,
Gold world by world the silent stars appear,
  And like a blossom blown before the breeze
A white moon drifts across the shimmering sky,
Mute arbitress of all thy sad, thy rapturous threnody.

Ah ! the brown bird has ceased : one exquisite trill
  About the sombre woodland seems to cling
Dying in music, else the air is still,
  So still that one might hear the bat's small wing
Wander and wheel above the pines, or tell
Each tiny dew-drop dripping from the bluebell's brimming
    cell.

And far away across the lengthening wold,
  Across the willowy flats and thickets brown,
Magdalen's tall tower tipped with tremulous gold
  Marks the long High Street of the little town,
And warns me to return : I must not wait
Hark ! 'tis the curfew booming from the bell in Christ
    Church gate.

OSCAR WILDE (Magdalen College).

From "The Burden of Itys."

CHRIST CHURCH FROM THE MEADOW IN 1799

Drawn by J. M. W. TURNER *and engraved by* J. BASIRE

To face p. 212

OXFORD FROM THE ISIS

AND there the golden city lay
  Safe in her leafy nest,
And softly on her clustering towers
  The blush of dawn did rest.

Onward for many and many a mile,
  Through fields that lay below,
Old Isis with his glassy stream
  Came pleasantly and slow.

The spring with blossoms rich and fair
  Had fringed the river's edge,
Pale Mayflowers and wild hyacinths
  And spears of tall green sedge.

The ripple on the flowery marge
  A pleasant sound did yield,
And pleasant was the wind that waved
  The long grass in the field.

F. W. FABER.

MEADOWSWEET : ON THE BANKS OF THE CHERWELL

IN summer fields the meadowsweet
Spreads its white bloom around the feet
Of those who pass in love or play
The golden hours of holiday :
Where heart to answering heart can beat
There grows the simple meadowsweet.

Deep-bosomed in some cool retreat
The long reed grasses nod and greet
The stream that murmurs as it goes
Songs of forget-me-not and rose ;
The filmy haze of noontide heat
Is faint with scents of meadowsweet.

Ah, love, do you know meadowsweet ?
Does some pale ghost of passion fleet
Adown the dreary lapse of years,
So void of love, so full of tears,—
Some half-remembered echo greet
The tender name of meadowsweet ?

W. L. COURTNEY.

ON THE CHER

THE morning light is like a song
Between the trees whose shadows throng
The water where we drift along.

Sweet song that scorns the toil of fools,
And only knows the golden rules
Of nature's saner, kindlier schools!

Sweet song that called us from the store
Of barren wisdom, dusty lore,
And drew us through the open door!

Adown the lilac-bordered way
We came to where the river lay
Girt with its bridal robe of May.

Along the stream the breeze is low,
Our steady paddles, moving slow,
Make gentle music as we go.

An open space and we behold
Blue hills engirdling, fold on fold,
The deep green meadows set with gold.

They pass, and now alone are seen
Green boughs o'erhanging, and between
Green banks the waters still and green.

With light and music everywhere
The spring has made creation fair;
The song of birds is in the air.

So on we drift and drifting down,
Crowned with sunlight's golden crown,
Catch glimpses of the toiling town.

Anon we moor our barque, and keep
Noon's vigil where the shades are deep,
And pass the charmèd gates of sleep.

Or turn to read—no more the page
Of some defunct, tutorial sage,
But words that know not time nor age.

—Lords of the lyre love taught to sing,
Swift birds of song with rapturous wing,
Dead poets who have loved the spring.

And so, 'mid music-haunted bowers,
We pass the slow declining hours,
And pile the idle boat with flowers.

Again we drift ; and now the pride
Of daylight fails, while far and wide
Long shadows crowd the country-side.

Behind the bridge the sun is set ;
His last red glory lingers yet,
And deepens into violet.

Regretful, with reluctant feet,
We turn beneath the elms to greet
The tumult of the gaslit street.

S (1895).
Oxford Magazine.

A SAIL TO SANDFORD

AT Folly Bridge we hoist the sail
And briskly scud before the gale
To Iffley—where our course awhile
Detain its locks and Saxon pile—
Affording pause to recommend
The Hobby-horse unto my friend,
Our light-built galley : ours, I say,
Since Warren bears an equal sway
In her command ; as first, in cost
The half he shared ; himself a host,
Whether he plies the limber oar
Or tows the vessel from the shore,
Or strains the main sheet tight astern
Close to the wind. Of him I learn
Patient to wait the time exact
When jib and foresail should be backed
To bring her round ; or mark the strain
The boat on gunwale can sustain,
Without aught danger of upsetting
Or giving both her mates a wetting.
We visit Sandford next, and there
Beckley provides accustomed fare
Of eels, and perch, and brown beefsteak—
Dainties we taste oft twice a week,
Whilst, Hebe-like, his daughter waits,
Froths our full bumpers, changes plates.
The pretty handmaid's anxious toils
Meanwhile our mutual praise beguiles,
Whilst she, delighted, blushing sees
The bill o'erpaid, and pockets fees
Supplied for ribbon or for lace
To deck her bonnet or her face.

A game at quoits will our stay
Awhile at Sandford Inn delay,
Or rustic nine-pins; then, once more,
We hoist our sail, and tug the oar
To Newnham bound. Can books bestow
One half the joy we truants know?

(June 15, 1793.)

In a "Letter from Oxford," attributed to John Skinner of Trinity College.

THE GOSSIPING STREAMS

AUNT Isis then, I meant to say,
As by these wells she takes her way,
So smooth, so calm, serene and hush
She scarcely stirs the bordering rush,
By her example shews the Muse
That she has nought to do with news;
That meditations more become her
Than gossiping with Fame and Rumour.
Hence much engaged in studious labour,
We scarcely know our next door neighbour;
Of men and things have no discerning,
Grown ignorant by too much learning.
But Fame, to be revenged, has said
That like true superannuate maid,
Isis can put on various faces,
And different forms in different places.
Here Isis in her graver airs
Is all for learning, books and prayers;
Observe her but a little lower,
Isis is changed, you would not know her:
So giddy, brisk and full of pranks,
She scarce can keep within her banks;
No more a venerable queen
She seems a school girl of fifteen
She chatters, like a lady's parrot
With Cherwell, who partakes her chariot;
For watery powers, through every age,
Have always kept their equipage.
Scarce are these sisters got a mile hence
Ready to burst with keeping silence,

Ere both at once begin their tattle
And over every pebble prattle.
What hinting, nodding as they travel,
What whispering over beds of gravel!
From observations on the weather,
They come to who and who's together.
One tells a story with a wink,
'T other replies she did not think
The Doctor had been fond of drink.
"But sister—that same reverend Dean,
Dear Cherwell—you know whom I mean—
With such a trollops! fie for shame!
Indeed the man is much to blame."
—Thus they; and thus their scandal breeds,
'Tis overheard by listening reeds,
Without much hesitation, which
Whisper it up the neighbouring ditch;
The ditch, one may with truth allege,
Can keep no secret from the hedge;
The hedge repeats the story, till
It shortly hath attained the hill;
The Dryad of the upland oak
To tattling Zephyr tells the joke;
And Zephyr, proud of aught to say,
Soon to the city wings his way.

ANONYMOUS.

From "An Epistle written from Oxford to Mrs. S—— in London, 1762."

BAB-LOCK-HYTHE

IN the time of wild roses
As up Thames we travelled
Where 'mid water-weeds ravelled
The lily uncloses,

To his old shores the river
A new song was singing,
And young shoots were springing
On old roots for ever.

Dog-daisies were dancing,
And flags flamed in cluster,
On the dark stream a lustre
Now blurred and now glancing.

A tall reed down-weighing,
The sedge-warbler fluttered;
One sweet note he uttered,
Then left it soft-swaying.

By the bank's sandy hollow
My dipt oars went beating,
And past our bows fleeting
Blue-backed shone the swallow.

High woods, heron-haunted,
Rose, changed, as we rounded
Old hills greenly mounded,
To meadows enchanted.

A dream ever moulded
Afresh for our wonder,

Still opening asunder
For the stream many-folded;

Till sunset was rimming
The West with pale flushes;
Behind the black rushes
The last light was dimming;

And the lonely stream, hiding
Shy birds, grew more lonely,
And with us was only
The noise of our gliding.

In cloud of grey weather
The evening o'erdarkened.
In the stillness we hearkened;
Our hearts sang together.

LAURENCE BINYON.

MAGDALEN COLLEGE

Why hang the sweet bells mute in Magdalen Tower
Still wont to usher in delightful May,
The dewy silence of the morning hour
Cheering with many a changeful roundelay?
And those pure youthful voices, where are they,
Whose hymning far up in the listening sky
Seemed issuing softly through the gates of day,
As if a troop of sainted souls on high
Were hovering o'er the earth with angel melody?

JOHN WILSON.
From "The Scholar's Funeral, 1789."

THE OLD APPROACH TO MAGDALEN COLLEGE

From a Drawing by F. MACKENZIE *for the Oxford Almanac of* 1847

To face p. 225

TO MY MOST DEERE AND BEST BELOVED PATRONESSE, MAGDALEN COLLEDGE, IN OXFORD

O HONYED Magdalen ! sweete, past compare
Of all the blisfull heavens on earth that are ;
Happy are they that in thee live at rest,
As free from ignorance as State-distrest.
O that I had an angells tongue to mount
Thy praise beyond the pitch of highst account !
Store makes me scarce ; I have and have not words
To royallise thy fame as Fame affords ;
For Fame, and Fortune both, together strives
To crowne thy praise with rich superlatives.
(Meere abysse of terrene felicity !
Divine enchantress of the eare and eye)
The wings wherewith thou mount'st thyself above
Are wealth and arte, and what else causeth love.
Live long together, head and corps, and all
That's yours directly, is collaterall.
I have no gifts your grace to amplifie,
But must, with myne advice, the same supply :
Take heed how you disjoyne or fall at Strife,
For I observe all fortunes in this life ;
And of them all, which I have seen or proved,
Yours, onely yours, deserves to be beloved.

SIR JOHN DAVIES (of Hereford).

TO THE MOST FAIRE, MOST FORTUNATE AND NO LESSE FAMOUS MAGDALEN COLLEDGE, IN OXFORD

BLEST be that Thought, past time beyond al thought,
That first did move that wise, as holy hart,
To reare this Trophy where his virtues fought
And conquered Rage, with whom those times took part.
A sacred Trophy left for Virtue's use
Not onely (as are others) for meere fame;
But as a nere-dri'd Dugge unto the Muse,
That times, past time, might suck sweets from the same.
Sing sweetly (blessèd Babes, that sucke the Brest
Of this sweete Nectar-dropping Magdalen)
Their praise in holy Hymnes, by whom yee Feast,
The God of Gods, and Waineflet best of Men:
Sing in an Union with the Angels' Quires,
Sith Heaven's your house, contenting your desires.

SIR JOHN DAVIES (of Hereford).

ADDISON'S WALK

GREEN natural cloister of our Academe,
What ghost is this that greets us as we pace
Beneath your boughs, the genius of the place,
With soft accost that fits our musing dream?
Scholar, divine, or statesman would beseem
That reverend air, that pensive-brilliant face
And lofty wit and speech of Attic grace
Rich in grave ornament and noble theme.

'Tis he who played unspoiled a worldly part,
Taught the town truth, and in a formal age
Lured fop and toast to heed a note sublime;
Who here had early learned the crowning art,
To walk the world like Plato's monarch-sage
Spectator of all being and all time.

T. H. WARREN (President of Magdalen).

MAY-DAY ON MAGDALEN TOWER
WRITTEN FOR MR. HUNT'S PICTURE

MORN of the year, of day and May the prime !
How fitly do we scale the steep dark stair,
Into the brightness of the matin air,
To praise with chanted hymn and echoing chime,
Dear Lord of Light, Thy lowlihead sublime
That stooped erewhile our life's frail weed to wear !
Sun, clouds, and hills, all things Thou framest so fair,
With us are glad and gay, greeting the time.

The college of the lily leaves her sleep ;
The grey tower rocks and trembles into sound,
Dawn-smitten Memnon of a happier hour ;
Through faint-hued fields the silver waters creep ;
Day grows, birds pipe, and robed anew and crowned,
Green Spring trips forth to set the world aflower.

T. H. WARREN.

MAGDALEN WALKS

THE little white clouds are racing over the sky,
And the fields are strewn with the gold of the flower of March,
The daffodil breaks under foot, and the tasselled larch
Sways and swings as the thrush goes hurrying by.

A delicate odour is borne on the wings of the morning breeze,
The odour of leaves, and of grass, and of newly upturned earth,
The birds are singing for joy of the spring's glad birth,
Hopping from branch to branch on the rocking trees.

And all the woods are alive with the murmur and sound of Spring,
And the rosebud breaks into pink on the climbing briar,
And the crocus bed is a quivering moon of fire,
Girdled round with the belt of an amethyst ring.

And the plane to the pine-tree is whispering some tale of love,
Till it rustles with laughter and tosses its mantle of green,
And the gloom of the wych-elm's hollow is lit with the iris sheen
Of the burnished rainbow throat and the silver breast of a dove.

See! the lark starts up from his bed in the meadow there,
Breaking the gossamer threads and the nets of dew,
And flashing adown the river, a flame of blue!
The kingfisher flies like an arrow, and wounds the air.

And the sense of my life is sweet! though I know that
the end is nigh;
For the ruin and rain of winter will shortly come,
The lily will lose its gold, and the chestnut-bloom
In billows of red and white on the grass will lie.

And even the light of the sun will fade at the last,
And the leaves will fall, and the birds will hasten away,
And I will be left in the snow of a flowerless day
To think on the glories of spring and the joys of a youth
long past.

Yet be silent, my heart! do not count it a profitless
thing
To have seen the splendour of the sun, and of grass,
and of flower!
To have lived and loved! for I hold that to love for
an hour
Is better for man or woman than cycles of blossoming
spring.

OSCAR WILDE (1881).

MAGDALEN GARDENS AND MAGDALEN BRIDGE

I

HERE in these walks where May brings June to birth
Peace reigns and rest; these leafy aisles are free
From harm of axe and hammer—every tree
Dense-clad with summer, and shrill-tongued with mirth.
Spirit of beauty, very God on earth,
Earth loves thee ever and is loved of thee;
Is it by man alone that thou must see
Wrong done thee, thankless change and waste and dearth?

Nay, but thou lovedst us too, in days gone by;
Wilt thou not turn and visit us in pity,
Here where thou once wast wont to show thy face
To those whose sons forget thee or deny,
Before they have destroyed thy holy city
And quite laid waste what was thy dwelling-place.

II

O ye philanthropists of wills and powers
Well-nigh divine, who would make all things new
In earth and heaven, and almost do it too;
Ye men of progress, who would plant the bowers
Of Eden with your villas, and its flowers
Uproot that you might run a tramway through,
To serve mankind and swell your revenue:
Will you leave nothing good we may call ours?

O yes; we know your mission is to bless,
And we are sick with selfish fantasies,
  And *When men ask for bread we give a stone*,
  Only we have a scripture of our own
  Which saith *Man shall not live by bread alone*
Even in your fire-new howling wilderness.

J. B. B. Nichols.

From "Love in Idleness."

MAGDALEN WALKS IN WINTER

A SHEET of water set about with trees,
Bare branches black against the evening sky,
And black reflected in the leaden mere ;
The chill forbidding waters seem to freeze,
Save when an outcast wind unwillingly
Shudders across their surface as in fear.

Out to the west the sky is dusky red,
And cleft in sunder by that lovely tower,
Crowns its dim pinnacles with one dim star ;
Lo, for a signal that the day is dead
The chapel bells toll out and tell the hour,
Answered by city echoes from afar.

Winter is passing by us where we stand
Can you not hear his footfall on the mould
And catch his breathing through the twilight air ?
All things are dumb and patient to his hand,
Whose guerdon is the darkness and the cold,
The cold like death and darkness like despair.

J. B. B. NICHOLS.

From "Love in Idleness."

MAGDALEN

THE brooding night rests on these fields of peace ;
Soft by the wooded walks the waters shine,
Loth to pass on in murmurous release :
The mists of evening find no lovelier shrine
To wreathe with floating folds in wizard spell :
Where o'er grey cloistered walls the moon appears
Unwearied stands the sweet-tongued sentinel,
Fair friend of time, companion of the years.

Here we have sped the day and dreamed the night ;
Our comrade hopes have paced these paths in joy
And put to rout oncoming time, and space
That yawns precipitate before our sight.
Ah friend ! our love need fear no base alloy
When walls grow hoar like this and find new grace.

G. W. W.

Oxford Magazine, 1906.

ADDISON'S WALK

ADOWN yon path, beside the grassy sweep
Of Maudlin park, where light deer couch and leap,
And giant elms the haughty winds delay,
There gentle Addison was wont to stray :—
And where the mill-stream turns the restless wheel,
As writhing on the broken waters steal,
His tree-lined walk of beauteous length began,
For ever hallowed by that holy man !
In many a whirl hath autumn's driving blast
From these fond trees their summer foliage cast,
And leafy showers now mournfully abound
In sallow redness scattered o'er the ground ;
Yet here full oft, the branches waving green,
And heaven's blue magic smiling in between,
The pensive rambler dream'd an hour away
Or wove the music of his Attic lay,
Saw Cato's grandeur on his soul arise,
And heaven half open to a heathen's eyes,
Or, happier themes, whose ethic pureness glows
With every tint that character bestows,
From ancient lore his tender heart beguiled
And lit his features when his fancy smiled.

ROBT. MONTGOMERY (Lincoln College).

ON THE DEATH OF DR. LANCTON, PRESIDENT OF MAUDLIN COLLEGE

BECAUSE of fleshly mould wee bee
Subject unto mortality,
Let noe man wonder at his death,
More flesh he had, and then lesse breath.
But if you question how he died,
'Twas not the fall of swelling pride,
'Twas noe ambition to ascend
Heaven in humility; his end
Assured us that his God did make
This peece for our example's sake.
Had you but seene him in his way
To Church, his last blest Sabbath day;
His struggling soule did make such hast
As if each breath would bee his last.
Each bricke hee trod on, shrinking strove
To make his grave and shew its love.
O how his sweating body wept
Knowing how soone it should bee swept
In mould! But while he kneels to pray
His weighty members long to stay.
Each word doth bring a breathlesse teare
As if he'd leave his spirit there.
Hee gone looks back, as if to see
The place where he should buried bee,
Bowing as if hee did desire
At the same time for to expire.
Which being done, he long shall dwell
Within the place hee loved so well,
Where night and morning hundreds come
A Pilgrimage unto his tomb.

WILLIAM STRODE (Christ Church).
1600-45. *Public Orator in* 1629.

A CENTURY OF VERSES, IN MEMORY OF THE REVEREND THE PRESIDENT OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, DR. ROUTH

GRIEF upon grief! It seems as if each day
Came laden with a freight of heavy news
From East or West. My letters, fringed with black,
Bring me but sighs; and when the heart is full
One drop will make the bitter cup o'erflow.

Grave, reverend Sir! I scarcely knew how dear
I held thy memory, till I stood before
Thy darkened gate, and learnt thy message kind—
"When next he calls, he must be made come in."
Alas, 'twas now a message from the grave!
There was no voice nor motion; calm the scene
Around me, as the memory of the blest.
For still, the quiet precinct of thy home
Seemed like some little favoured nook apart,
Where no rough wind might enter, no harsh sound
Make itself heard, nor chance nor change intrude.
Waynflete's time-honoured gateway, decked about
With kneeling Saints, and sheltered from rude hands
By the low fence which bounds thy modest lawn,
O'erhung me like a blessing; and a few
Faint flowers were lingering near me; and no sound
Broke the sweet silence, save a bird that trilled
Farewell to Summer from a wintry thorn.

Would I had seen thy honoured face once more!
So loath was I to weary thee; to tax
Thy reverend courtesy; and add the weight
Even of a feather to thy pile of years,

That still I kept aloof from one whose words
Were ever words of kindness ; whose discourse
Was pleasant to me as a skilful song
Which haunts the heart and brain, and will not die.
How could it fail be so ? For who like thee
To talk of ancient times and ancient men,
And render back their image ? who like thee
For sacred lore ? Thy speech recalled the days
When Truth was deemed eternal ; when men's eyes
Were taught to hail the everlasting hills
As beacons of their journey ; and their hearts,
Not tossed as now on wretched waves of doubt,
Were anchored fast to that eternal shore
Where thou didst make, and now hast found, thy home.

And there already—(for not mine the creed,
Oh, no, not mine the cold, unlovely creed
Which dreams of treasures lost when good men die)—
Already, doubtless, on that starlit strand
Hast thou been welcomed with glad words, as when
Some voyaging barque, long time detained at sea,
Looms in the offing, and a thousand hearts
Crowd to the beach, impatient for their joy.
There, as I think, thou wilt behold the eyes
And hear the voices of those ancient Saints
Whose few yet precious pages, once the sport
Of gusty winds, became thy pious care :
The Sardian Melito, Polycrates,
Papias the Phrygian, Pinytus of Crete,
Julius and Hegesippus, and the rest ;
Who lived before those Seven, to whom St. John
Spake words of warning, gave their souls to God.

Calm life, that labouring in forgotten fields
Didst hive the sweets of each! calm, happy life
Of learned leisure and long studious days,
Spent in a curious Paradise of Books;
How wert thou spared to witness to the sons
The manners and the wisdom of their sires!
Resembling more some marvel of the past
Than aught of modern fashion. Let me long
Cherish thy precious memory! long retain
The image of thy venerable form
Stooping beneath its century of years,
And wrapped in solemn academic robes,
Cassock and scarf, and buckles, bands and wig,
And such a face as none beheld before
Save in an ancient frame on College walls,
And heard of as "the portrait of a grave
And learned Divine who flourished years ago."

Yet would thy sunken eye shine bright as day
If haply some one touched thy favourite theme—
The martyred Monarch's fortunes and his times:
Yet brighter, if the memories of thy youth
Were quickened into sudden life: but most
'Twas joy to hear thy solemn voice descant
Of Fathers, Councils, and the Page Divine.
For then thy words were precious, and well-weighed,
Oracular with wisdom. Or if men
And manners were thy theme—scholars and wits,
The idols of past years—how rich thy vein!
Thy speech how courteous, classical and kind!
Each story new because so wondrous old,
And each particular exactly given,
The name, the place, the author, yea, the page—

Naught was forgotten. "But I tire you, Sir"
(So would he say), "I fear I tire you, Sir?
An old man, Sir!"—while one's heart danced for joy.

He sleeps before the altar, where the shade
He loved will guard his slumbers night and day;
And tuneful voices o'er him, like a dirge,
Will float for everlasting. Fitting close
For such a life! His twelve long sunny hours
Bright to the edge of darkness; then, the calm
Repose of twilight and a crown of stars.

J. W. Burgon (1855).

To Dr. Hawkins, Provost of Oriel, one of the last persons who conversed with Dr. Routh.

OLD MAGDALEN BRIDGE

From a Drawing by J. B. MALCHAIR *before its destruction in* 1772

To face p. 240

MAGDALEN CHAPEL

THE Carfax bell is tolling: the old town
Lies in a dull June haze: the cloisters,
Worn down by many a foot, are quiet now.
The pillars stand a-dreaming, though the hands
That fashioned them now lie beneath the dust,
Hushed in forgetfulness: from point to point
The shadows creep; and that great judgment scene,
Burnt on the western window, is ablaze
With wrestling figures wrapped in bronzèd flame
Against the falling sun.
Come! Charmides,
Children are we of nature, not of wrath.
The meadow by the winding riverside,
The fluttered reeds and flags and feathered grass,
And all the thousand wingèd things of life,
Shall be our playmates, our delight: till dusk
Draw down the sun to visit other lands.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE.

A Section from "Charmides."

AD GYMNASIUM MAGDALENENSE

O PRAECLARA domus, Musarum candida sedes,
Per quam sunt multis semina sparsa locis,
Dulcia divini nimirum semina verbi,
Quae possunt homines sola beare pios.
Salveto ! Servet te Christus, servet alumnos,
Quos gremio nutris officiosa tuo.
Me quoque nutrieras olim, cum parvulus essem,
Nunc factus juvenis sum memor usque tui.
Si mihi suppeterent vires, tibi grata referrem
Munera ; cum nequeam sit voluisse satis.

JOHN PARKHURST (1573).

BODLEY AND THE BODLEIAN

Heere in this goodly Magazine of witte,
This Storehouse of the choisest furniture
The world doth yeelde, here in this exquisite
And most rare monument, that doth immure
The glorious reliques of the best of men,
Thou, part imperfect work, vouchsafed art
A litle roome.

SAM. DANIEL (1601)

Jam nunc, ingenti conspecta hac mole librorum,
An tibi discendi pectore crevit amor?
Nam (dixisse pudet) mihi desperatio mentem
Cum video ingenii tot monumenta, subit.

M. AUBRY (1795).

PINDARIC ODE

HAIL ! Learning's Pantheon ! Hail, the sacred Ark,
Where all the World of Science does embark !
Which ever shall withstand, and hast so long withstood,
Insatiate Time's devouring flood !
Hail, Tree of Knowledge ! thy Leaves Fruit ! which well
Dost in the midst of Paradise arise,
Oxford, the Muses' Paradise !
From which may never Sword the Blest expel.
Hail, Bank of all past Ages, where they lie
To enrich with Interest Posterity !
Hail, Wit's illustrious Galaxy,
Where thousand Lights into one Brightness spread,
Hail, living University of the Dead !

Unconfused Babel of all Tongues, which e'er
The mighty Linguist, Fame, or Time, the mighty Traveller,
That could Speak or This could Hear !
Majestic Monument and Pyramid,
Where still the Shapes of parted Souls abide
Embalmed in Verse ! exalted Souls, which now,
Enjoy those Arts they wooed so well below !
Which now all Wonders printed plainly see
That have been, are, or are to be,
In the mysterious Library
The Beatific Bodley of the Dead !

Will ye into your sacred throng admit
The meanest British wit ?
Ye General Council of the Priests of Fame,
Will ye not murmur and disdain

That I a place amongst ye claim
The humblest Deacon of her train ?
Will ye allow me the honourable Chain ?
The Chain of Ornament, which here
Your noble Prisoners proudly wear ?
A Chain which will more pleasant seem to me
Than all my own Pindaric Liberty.
Will ye to bind me with these mighty names submit
Like an Apocrypha with Holy Writ ?
Whatever happy Book is chained here,
No other place or people needs to fear ;
His Chain's a Passport to go everywhere.

As when a seat in Heaven
Is to an unmalicious Sinner given,
Who casting round his wondering Eye
Does none but Patriarchs and Apostles there espy,
Martyrs who did their lives bestow,
And Saints who Martyrs lived below,
With trembling and amazement he begins
To recollect his frailties past and sins,
He doubts almost his Station there,
His Soul says to itself, " How came I here ? "
It fares no otherwise with me
When I myself with conscious wonder see
Amidst this Purified Elected Company ;
With hardship they and pain
Did to their happiness attain.
No labours I or merits can pretend ;
I think, Predestination only was my Friend.

Ah ! if my Author had been tied, like Me,
To such a Place and such a Company,

Instead of several Countries, several Men,
And Business, which the Muses hate!
He might have then improved that small Estate
Which Nature sparingly did to him give;
He might perhaps have thriven then,
And settled upon me, his Child, somewhat to Live;
It had happier been for Him, as well as Me.
For when all, alas, is done
We Books, I mean you Books, will prove to be
The best and noblest Conversation.
For though some Errors will get in,
Like Tinctures of Original Sin,
Yet sure we from our Father's wit
Draw all the Strength and Spirits of it,
Leaving the grosser parts for Conversation,
As the best Blood of Man's employed on Generation.

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1656).

ON THE DEATH OF SIR THOMAS BODLEY

ONE Homer was enough to blazon forth,
In a full lofty stile Ulysses' praise,
Caesar had Lucan to enrol his worth,
Unto the memory of endless days.
Of thy deeds, Bodley, from thine own pure spring
A thousand Homers and sweet Lucans sing.
One volume was a monument to bound,
The large extent of their deserving pains,
In learning's commonwealth was never found,
So large a decade to express thy strains,
Which who desires to character aright,
Must read more books than they had lines to write.
Yet give this little river leave to run,
Into the boundless ocean of thy fame;
Had they first ended I had not begun,
Sith each is a Protogenes to frame
So curiously the picture of thy worth
That when all's done, art wants to set it forth.

PETER PRIDEAUX (Exeter College, 1613).

THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY

Drawn by BUCKLER *and engraved by* G. HOLLIS

To face p. 248

ON SIR THOMAS BODLEY'S LIBRARY, THE AUTHOR THEN BEING IN OXFORD

BOAST not, proud Golgotha, that thou canst show
The ruines of mankind, and let us know
How fraile a thing is flesh ! though we see there
But empty skulls, the Rabbins still live here.
They are not dead, but full of blood again,
I mean the sense, and every line a vein.
Triumph not o'er their dust ; whoever looks
In here, shall find their brains all in their books.
Nor is't old Palestine alone survives,
Athens lives here, more than in Plutarch's lives.
The stones which sometimes danced unto the strain
Of Orpheus, here do lodge his muse again.
And you the Roman spirits, Learning has
Made your lives longer than your empire was
Caesar had perished from the world of men,
Had not his sword been rescued by his pen.
Rare Seneca ! how lasting is thy breath !
Though Nero did, thou could'st not bleed to death.
How dull the expert tyrant was, to look
For that in thee, which livèd in thy book !
Afflictions turn our blood to ink, and we
Commence, when writing, our eternity.
Lucilius here I can behold, and see
His counsels and his life proceed from thee.
But what care I to whom thy Letters be ?
I change the name, and thou dost write to me ;
And in this age, as sad almost as thine,
Thy stately Consolations are mine.
Poor Earth ! what though thy viler dust enrouls
The frail enclosure of these mighty souls ?
Their graves are all upon record ; not one

But is as bright and open as the sun.
And though some part of them obscurely fell
And perished in an unknown, private cell,
Yet in their books they found a glorious way
To live unto the Resurrection-day!
  Most noble Bodley! we are bound to thee
For no small part of our eternity.
Thy treasure was not spent on horse and hound,
Nor that new mode, which doth old States confound.
Thy legacies another way did go,
Nor were they left to those would spend them so.
Thy safe, discreet expense on us did flow;
Walsam is in the midst of Oxford now.
Thou hast made us all thine heirs; whatever we
Hereafter write, 'tis thy posterity.
This is thy monument! here thou shalt stand
Till the times fail in their last grain of sand.
And wheresoe'er thy silent reliques keep,
This tomb will never let thine honour sleep.
Still we shall think upon thee; all our fame
Meets here to speak one letter of thy name.
Thou canst not die! Here thou art more than safe,
Where every book is thy large epitaph.

HENRY VAUGHAN (Jesus College).

UPON THE CHAIR MADE OUT OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S SHIP, PRESENTED TO THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN OXFORD BY JOHN DAVIS, OF DEPTFORD, ESQ.

TO this great ship, which round the world has run,
And matched in race the chariot of the sun,
This Pythagorean ship (for it may claim,
Without presumption, so deserved a name ;
By knowledge once, and transformation now)
In her new shape this sacred port allow.
Drake and his ship could not have wished from Fate
A more blessed station, or more blessed estate,
For lo ! a set of endless rest is given
To her in Oxford and to him in heaven.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

ODE ON SITTING AND DRINKING IN THE CHAIR MADE FROM SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S SHIP

CHEER up, my Mates! the wind does fairly blow;
Clap on more sail, and never spare;
Farewell, all lands, for now we are
In the wide sea of drink, and merrily we go.
Bless me, 'tis hot: another bowl of wine,
And we shall cut the burning line.
Hey, Boys, she scuds away, and by my head I know
We round the world are sailing now.
What dull men are those who tarry at home,
When abroad they might wantonly roam,
And gain such experience and spy, too,
Such countries and wonders as I do?
But prithee, good Pilot! take heed what you do,
And fail not to touch at Peru;
With gold there the vessel we'll store,
And never, and never be poor,
No, never be poor any more.

II

What do I mean? What thoughts do me misguide?
As well upon a staff may witches ride
Their fancied journeys in the air,
As I sail round the ocean in this Chair;
'Tis true; but yet this Chair which here you see,
For all its quiet now and gravity,
Has wandered and has travelled more
Then ever beast, or fish, or bird, or tree before.
In every air and every sea it has been,
It has compassed all the earth, and all the heavens it has seen.

Let not the Pope's itself with this compare ;
This is the only universal Chair.

III

The pious wanderer's fleet, saved from the flame,
(Which did the reliques still of Troy pursue
And took them for its due)
A squadron of immortal nymphs became ;
Still with their arms they row about the seas,
And still make new and greater voyages.
Nor has the first poetic ship of Greece
(Though now a star she so triumphant show,
And guide her sailing successors below,
Bright as her ancient freight, the shining Fleece)
Yet to this day a quiet harbour found ;
The tide of heaven still carries her around.
Only Drake's sacred vessel, which before
Had done, and had seen more
Than those have done or seen,
Even since they goddesses and this a star has been,
As a reward for all her labour past,
Is made the seat of rest at last.
Let the case now quite altered be,
And as thou wentest abroad the world to see,
Let the world now come to see thee.

IV

The world will do it ; for curiosity
Does, no less than devotion, pilgrims make ;
And I myself, who now love quiet, too,

As much almost as any chair can do,
Would yet a journey take
An old wheel of that chariot to see
Which Phaethon so rashly brake.
Yet what could that say more than these remains of Drake?
Great Relique! thou, too, in this port of ease
Hast still one way of making voyages;
The breath of Fame, like an auspicious gale,
(The great trade-wind which ne'er does fail)
Shall drive thee round the world, and thou shalt run
As long around it as the sun.
The Straights of Time too narrow are for thee,
Launch forth into an undiscovered sea,
And steer the endless course of vast eternity;
Take for thy sail this verse and for thy pilot me.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

ODE TO JOHN ROUSE, BODLEY'S LIBRARIAN

QUIS te, parve liber, quis te fratribus
Subduxit reliquis dolo,
Cum tu missus ab urbe,
Docto jugiter obsecrante amico,
Illustre tendebas iter
Thamesis ad incunabula
Caerulei patris,
Fontes ubi limpidi
Aonidum, thyasusque sacer,
Orbi notus per immensos
Temporum lapsus redeunte caelo,
Celeberque futurus in aevum.

Quin tu, libelle, nuntii licet mala
Fide, vel oscitantia,
Semel erraveris agmine fatrum ;
Seu quis te teneat specus,
Seu qua te latebra, forsan unde vili
Callo tereris institoris insulsi,
Laetare felix ; en, iterum tibi
Spes nova fulget posse profundam
Fugere Lethem, vehique superam
In Jovis aulam remige penna.

Nam te Roüsius sui
Optat peculî, numeroque justo
Sibi pollicitum queritur abesse ;
Rogatque venias ille, cujus inclyta
Sunt data virum monumenta curae ;
Teque adytis etiam sacris
Voluit reponi, quibus et ipse praesidet

Aeternorum operum custos fidelis,
Quaestorque gazae nobilioris
Quam cui praefuit Ion,
Clarus Erectheides,
Opulenta dei per templa parentis,
Fulvosque tripodas, donaque Delphica,
Ion Actaeâ genitus Creusâ.

Ergo tu visere lucos
Musarum ibis amoenos;
Diamque Phoebi rursus ibis in domum
Oxoniâ quam valle colit,
Delo posthabitâ,
Bifidoque Parnassi jugo,
Ibis honestus,
Postquam egregiam tu quoque sortem
Nactus abis, dextri prece sollicitatus amici.
Illic legeris inter alta nomina
Authorum, Graiae simul et Latinae
Antiqua gentis lumina et verum decus.

JOHN MILTON (1646).

[De libro Poematum amisso, quem ille sibi denuo mitti postulabat, ut cum aliis nostris in Bibliotheca Publica reponeret.]

[This ode was translated with much labour, though not very successfully, into unrhymed verse by Cowper.]

OCCASIONAL POEMS

He took the vewe from North and soe he leaves it still,
For there the buildings make the bravest showe,
And from those walkes the Scholers best it knowe.

On a View of Oxford, 1588.

Beauty invites—and Love and Learning plead,
The Oxford Scholar surely must succeed,
Yet, oh ye blooming, soft, inclining Fair,
Of his too fatal eloquence beware.

ANON.

Scilicet a juvene hic Res Nautica discitur omni
Nautica res Patriae firma columna suae.

M. AUBRY (1795).

IN A LECTURE-ROOM

AWAY, haunt thou not me,
Thou vain Philosophy!
Little hast thou bestead,
Save to perplex the head,
And leave the spirit dead.
Unto thy broken cisterns wherefore go,
While from the secret treasure-depths below,
Fed by the skiey shower,
And clouds that sink and rest on hill-tops high,
Wisdom at once and Power
Are welling, bubbling forth, unseen, incessantly?
Why labour at the dull, mechanic oar,
When the fresh breeze is blowing
And the strong current flowing,
Right onward to the Eternal Shore?

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1840).

1819–61.

Scholar of Balliol; Fellow of Oriel, 1842.

SNAPDRAGON

PLEASURE, wealth, birth, knowledge, power,
These have each an emblem flower;
So for me alone remains
Lowly thought and cheerful pains.
Be it mine to set restraint
On roving wish and selfish plaint;
And for man's drear haunts to leave
Dewy morn and balmy eve.
Be it mine the barren stone
To deck with green life not its own,
So to soften and to grace
Of human works the rugged face.
Mine the unseen to display
In the crowded public way,
Where life's busy arts combine
To shut out the Hand Divine.
Ah! no more a scentless flower,
By approving Heaven's high power,
Suddenly my leaves exhale
Fragrance of the Syrian gale.
Ah! 'tis timely comfort given
By the answering breath of Heaven!
May it be! then well might I
In College cloister live and die.

J. H. NEWMAN (Trinity College).

Oct. 2, 1827, *at Ulcombe.*

THE MASTER

THE wise, the good old Master, gone at last!
Loved for his open heart, his silver hair,
His pen that brought back Plato! and a charm
That was his own, of presence and of power!
England is poorer. He had spent his life
In high communion with the great of yore;
And passed as one who visits adverse shores,
Interpreter between two noble tongues,
From lands of young-eyed wisdom to a time
Old and perplexed; his work to call us back
To closer contact with simplicity,
And simpler utterance. He had grown old,
Through fifty years of Terms that flew as days
In his old College; yet had time no scar
Left on that forehead clear, capacious, calm,
In age still youthful as in youth once old,
Unwrinkled, like some smooth, broad-watered mere
Content in its wide margin unperturbed
To mirror all the lights of sun and moon,
Nor envy stormier ocean. Here he lived
In this his loved, his larger Academe,
Sage, seer, friend and teacher, all in one,
A moulding influence amid young and old,
Confessedly our greatest. With the Greek
He kept his balanced soul, nor joyed, nor grieved
Too much; nor stirred to ire with endless strife,
Chafed at life's limitations. One by one,
A wise old angler, carrying baits for all,
He snared the thoughtless student to his good,
Day-dreamers gaping after summer flies,
To thought and toil and spiritual aim:
Which they, scarce knowing what the force that moved

Magnetic, followed, indolently drawn
By that old man to labour for the world.
Thus he, a master angler, fished for men,
And smiling caught them. Yet—for well he knew
(Eternity is still the growth of Time)
Youth will not till the field without the flower,
Nor, pricked by thorns too early, seek the crown—
He bade us, often pausing on the word,
Lest evil tare should choke the wholesome corn,
And growing to possession dwarf the soul,
To nurse ambition : wisdom from below
He termed it—Happier could we choose the best !
But leading upward where all paths converge
To one high summit. Thus he bade us rise
To greatness, not the love of pelf or praise,
But noble greatness rightly understood,
Service of man the end, the crown of all,
Which only they, the chosen, reach at last,
Haply to stand on that high eminence,
Proud vantage-ground from which, where men are free,
The voice must speak that speaks to move a world.
Therein he spake true Master. Therefore now,
While fades the crimson on our aged walls,
And sadlier sings the robin from the Grove,
We lay our spotless garland on his grave,
And say, There sleeps a memorable man,
Great in high gifts, but greater in their use,
Most great of all in that rare atmosphere,
The indivisible personality
Wherein he moved, thought, will, affections, all
Life's elements commending what he taught,

Thirst of achievement, action, not of dreams,
Save as the labourer's rest to nourish deeds;
With, as befits Imperial citizens,
Strong love of country, and high hope of man;
Man with his greater Future still unborn.

ARTHUR GRAY BUTLER.

(*Written on the death of Dr. Jowett, Oct.* 1, 1893.

ON MR. RICE, THE MANCIPLE OF CH. CH.

WHO can doubt, Rice, but to th' eternall place
Thy soule is fledd, that did but know thy face?
Whose body was soe light, it might have gone
To heav'ne without a resurrection.
Indeed thou wert all type; thy limmes were signes,
Thy arteryes but mathematicke lines,
As if two soules had made thy compound good,
That both should live by faith, and none by blood.

RICHARD CORBET.
1582–1635.
Dean of Ch. Ch., Bishop of Oxford and Norwich.

ON MR. JOHN DEANE, OF NEW COLLEGE

LET no man walke neere this Tombe,
That hath left his Griefe at home.
Heere so much of Goodnesse lyes,
We should not weepe teares, but eyes,
And grope homeward from this stone
Blinde for contemplation
How to live and dye as he.
Deane, to thy dear memorye
With this I would offer more,
Could I be secured before
They should not be frowned upon
At thy Resurrection.
Yet accept upon thy hearse
My Teares, far better than my Verse.
They may turne to eyes, and keepe
Thy bed untouched, whilst thou dost sleepe.

WM. BROWNE (Exeter College).
1588–1643.

TO THE RT. HONOURABLE THE LADY PENELOPE, DOWAGER OF THE LATE VISCOUNT BAYNING OF SUDBURY; DIED JUNE 11, 1638

GREAT Lady, humble partners of like griefe
In bringing comfort may deserve beliefe,
Because they feele and feyne not. Thus we say
Unto ourselves, Lord Bayning, though away,
Is still of Christ Church, somewhat out of sight,
As when he travelled, or did bid good-night,
And was not seen long after. Now he stands
Removed in worlds, as heretofore in lands,
But is not lost. The spight of Death can never
Divide the Christian, though the man it sever.
The like we say to you. He's still at home,
Though out of reach, as in some upper roome,
Or study; for his place is very high.
His thought is vision; now most properly
Returned he's yours as sure, as 'ere hath been
The jewel in your cask, safe though unseen.
You know that friends have ears as well as eyes,
We heare he's well and living, that well dies.

THE GARDEN FRONT OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

From a Drawing by W. A. DELAMOTTE, 1841

To face p. 269

A COPY OF VERSES SPOKE TO KING CHARLES BY WAY OF ENTERTAINMENT WHEN HE WAS PLEASED TO GRACE ST. JOHN'S COLLEDGE WITH HIS VISIT. 1636

WERE they not Angells sang, did not mine eares
Drink in a Sacred Anthem from yon spheares?
Was I not blest with Charles and Maries name,
Names wherein dwells all Musick? 'Tis the same.
Hark, I myself now but speak Charles and Mary,
And 'tis a Poem, nay 'tis a library.
All haile to your dread Majesties, whose power
Adds lustre to our feast, and to our bower;
And what place fitter for so Royall guests
Then this, where every book presents a feast.
Here's Virgils well-drest Venison, here's the wine
Made Horace sing so sweetly; here you dine
With the rich Cleopatra's warlike love;
Nay you may feast and frolick here with Jove.
Next view that bower, which is as yet all green,
But when you're there, the red and white are seen.
A bower, which had ('tis true) been beautified
With catechising Arras on each side;
But we the Baptists sons did much desire
To have it like the dwelling of our sire
A grove or desart. See (dread Leige) youle guesse
Even our whole Colledge is a wildernesse.
Your eyes and eares being fed, taste of that feast
Which hath its pomp and glory from its guest.

ABRAHAM WRIGHT.

From "Parnassus Biceps."

ON THE IMPERFECTION OF CHRIST CHURCH BUILDINGS

ARISE, thou sacred heap, and show a frame
Perfect at last and glorious as thy name.
Space and torn majesty, as yet, are all
Thou hast; we view thy cradle, as thy fall.
Our dwelling lies half desert; the whole space
Unmeeted and unbounded, bears the face
Of the first age's fields and we, as they
That stand on hills, have prospect every way.
Like Theseus' son, curst by mistake, the frame,
Scattered and torn, hath parts without a name,
Which in a landskip some mischance, not meant,
As dropping of the sponge would represent;
And, if no succour comes, the time's not far
When 'twill be thought no college but a quar.
Send then Amphion to these Thebes, O Fates!
We've here as many breaches, though not gates.
When any stranger comes, 'tis shewn by us,
As once the face was of Antigonus,
With an half visage only, so that all
We boast is but a kitchen or an hall.
Men thence admire, but help not; 't hath the luck
Of heathen places that were thunder-struck,
To be adored, not touched: though the mind and will
Be in the pale, the purse is pagan still.
Alas! th' are towers that thunder do provoke,
We ne'er had height or glory for a stroke.
Time and King Henry, too, did spare us; we
Stood in those days both scythe and sceptre free.
Our ruins then were licenced and we were
Passed by untouched, that hand was open here.
Bless we our throne then! That which did avoid

The fury of those times seems yet destroyed.
So this, breathed on by no full influence
Hath hung e'er since unminded in suspense,
As doubtful whether 't should escheated be
To ruin, or redeemed to majesty.
But great intents stop seconds, and we owe
To larger wants that bounty is so slow.
A lordship here, like Curtius, might be cast
Into one hole and yet not seen at last.
Two sacred things were thought (by judging souls)
Beyond the kingdom's power, Christ Church and Paul's,
Till by a light from Heaven shown, the one
Did gain his second renovation,
And some good star, ere long, we do not fear,
Will guide the wise to offer some gifts here.
But ruins yet stand ruins, as if none
Durst be so good, as first to cast a stone.
Alas! we ask not prodigies: we'd boast
Had we but what is at one horse-race lost;
Nor is our house (as Nature in the fall
Is thought by some) void and bereft of all
But what's new given; unto ourselves we owe
That skulls are not our Church's pavement now;
That that's made yet good way; that to his cup
And table Christ may come and not ride up;
That no one stumbling fears a worse event,
Nor, when he bows, falls lower than he meant;
That now our windows may for doctrine pass,
And we (as Paul) see mysteries in a glass;
That something elsewhere is performed, whereby
'Tis seen we can adorn, though not supply.
  But if to all great buildings, as to Troy,
A god must needs be sent, and we enjoy

No help but miracle, if so it stand
Decreed by Heaven, that the same gracious hand
That perfected our statutes, must be sent
To finished Christ Church too, we are content;
Knowing that He who in the Mount did give
Those laws by which his people were to live,
If they had needed then, as we do now,
Would have bestowed the stone for tables too.

WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT (Student of Ch. Ch.).
1611–1643.
"*A most florid and seraphical preacher.*"

IN DEFENCE OF THE DECENT ORNAMENTS OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXON, OCCASIONED BY A BANBURY BROTHER, WHO CALLED THEM IDOLATRIES

YOU that prophane our windows with a tongue
Set like some clock on purpose to go wrong,
Who when you were at Service sighed, because
You heard the Organs musick not the Dawes.
Pittying our solemn state, shaking the head
To see no ruines from the flore to the lead;
To whose pure nose our Cedar gave offence
Crying it smelt of Papists' frankincense;
Who walking on our Marbles scoffing said
Whose bodies are under these Tombstones laid,
Counting our Tapers works of darknesse; and
Choosing to see Priests in blew-aprons stand
Rather than in rich Coapes which shew the art
Of Sisera's prey Imbrodred in each part.
Then when you saw the Altar's Bason said
Why's not the Ewer on the Cubboard's head,
Thinking our very Bibles too prophane,
Cause you ne'er bought such covers in Duck Lane,
Loathing all decency, as if yould have
Altars as foule and homely as a Grave.
Had you one spark of reason, you would find
Yourselves like Idolls to have eyes yet blind.
Tis only some base niggard Heresie
To think Religion loves deformity.
Glory did never yet make God the lesse
Neither can beauty defile holinesse,
What's more magnificent then Heaven? Yet where
Is there more love and piety then there?

From "Parnassus Biceps," 1656.

THE REYNOLDS WINDOW IN NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL

LO, from the canvass Beauty shifts her throne,
Lo, Picture's powers a new formation own!
Behold, she prints upon the crystal plain
With her own energy th' expressive stain!
The mighty master spreads his mimic toil
More wide, nor only blends the breathing oil,
But calls the lineaments of life complete
From genial alchymy's creative heat;
Obedient forms to the bright fusion gives,
While in the warm enamel Nature lives.
Reynolds, 'tis thine, from the broad window's height,
To add new lustre to religious light;
Not of its pomp to strip this ancient shrine
But bid that pomp with purer radiance shine;
With arts unknown before to reconcile
The willing Graces to the Gothic pile.

From T. Warton's poem on Sir Joshua Reynolds' painted window, 1782.

PROLOGUE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

THOUGH actors cannot much of learning boast,
Of all who want it we admire it most.
We love the praises of a learned pit,
As we remotely are allied to wit.
We speak our poet's wit and trade in ore
Like those who touch upon the golden shore ;
Betwixt our judges can distinction make,
Discern how much and why our poems take ;
Mark if the fools, or men of sense, rejoice,
Whether th' applause be only sound or voice.
When our fop gallants or our city follow
Clap over-loud, it makes us melancholy ;
We doubt that scene which does their wonder raise,
And, for their ignorance, contemn their praise.
Judge then, if we who act, and they who write,
Should not be proud of giving you delight.
London likes grossly, but this nicer pit
Examines, fathoms all the depths of wit ;
The ready finger lays on every blot,
Knows what should justly please and what should not
Nature herself lies open to your view ;
You judge, by her, what draught of her is true,
Where outlines false and colours seem too faint,
Where bunglers daub and where true poets paint
But by the sacred genius of this place,
By every muse, by each domestic grace,
Be kind to wit, which but endeavours well,
And, where you judge, presumes not to excel.
Our poets hither for adoption come,
As nations sued to be made free of Rome ;
Not in the suffragating tribes to stand,

But in your utmost, last, provincial band.
If his ambition may those hopes pursue,
Who, with religion, loves your arts and you,
Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
Than his own mother-university.
Thebes did his green, unknowing youth engage;
He chooses Athens in his riper age.

J. DRYDEN.

THE AMERICAN QUESTION AT OXFORD IN 1775

EACH morn the Chafing-dishes round
The College Quadrangles are found,
And, as the coals begin to glisten,
You'll hear the Boiler, if you listen,
Running his treble notes up high,
To Chafing-dish beneath him cry:—
"Wee, wee, wee, we, wehee, wee, we!
Shall both of us exhausted be,
Between this Fire and you and me
About a Dish or two of Tea?"

G. HUDDESFORD.

THE MARTYRS' MEMORIAL

HERE Latimer and Ridley in the flames
Bore witness to the truth. If thou hast walked
Uprightly through the world, just thoughts of joy
May fill thy breast, in contemplating here
Congenial virtue. But if thou hast swerved
From the strait path of even rectitude,
Fearful in trying seasons to assert
The better cause, or to forsake the worse
Reluctant, when perchance therein enthralled
Slave to false shame ; O, thankfully receive
The sharp, compunctious motions that this spot
May wake within thee, and be wise in time,
And let the future for the past atone.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

MERTON AND THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE CHERWELL

Drawn by J. BUCKLER *and engraved by* G. HOLLIS

From RYMAN'S "*Illustrations of Oxford*," 1839

To face p. 279

FROM CHRIST CHURCH MEADOW

ONE day, the college chapel ended,
All pagan books I put away
In sign of Christian holy-day,
And through the sunny streets I wended.
I walked within a meadow, where
The willow-tops were burnished fair
With cold November's windy gleams,
And watched two green and earthy streams
Along the white frost-beaded grass
With their leaf-laden waters pass.
And bright rose the towers
Through the half-stripped bowers,
And the sun on the windows danced;
The churches looked white
In the morning light
And the gilded crosses glanced.
Methought, as I gazed on yon holy pile,
Statue and moulding and buttress bold
Seemed pencilled with flame, and burning the while
Like the shapes in a furnace of molten gold.
As the fire sank down or glowed anew,
The fretted stones of the fabric grew
So thin that the eye might pierce them through,
Till statue and moulding and buttress bold,
And each well-known figure and carving old,
Peeled off from their place in the turret hoar,
Like the winter bark of a sycamore,
And dropped away as the misty vest
That morning strips from the mountain's breast.
And as the earthly building fell,
That was so old and strong,
Clear glowed the Church Invisible
Which had been veiled so long.

F. W. FABER.

ST. MARY'S AT NIGHT

DEAR Mother! at whose angel-guarded shrine
The faithful sought of old their daily bread,
How full thou art of impulses divine
And memories deep and dread!

Steeped in the shades of night thou art unseen,
All save thy fretted tower, and airy spire
That travels upward to yon blue serene,
Like a mighty altar fire;

For wavy streams of moonlight creep and move
Through little arches, and o'er sculptures rare,
So lifelike one might deem that angels love
To come and cluster there.

Oh! it is well that thou to us should'st be
Like the mysterious bush, engirt with flame,
Yet unconsumed, as she that gifted thee
With her high virgin name.

And like the Church, that hath for ages stood
Within the world and always been on fire;
Albeit her hidden scent, like cedar-wood,
Smells sweetest on the pyre.

The city sleeps around thee, save the few
That keep sad vigil, with their spirits bare
As Gideon's fleece, to catch the cold fresh dew
That falls on midnight prayer.

Why doth thy lonely tower tell forth the time,
When men nor heed nor hear the warning sound?
Why waste the solemn music of thy chime
On hearts in slumber bound?

Is it because thou art a church, to tell
How fast the end of all things comes along,
And, though men hear thee not, thy voice doth swell
Each night more clear and strong:

Content the few that watch should hear, and feel
Secure their Mother doth not, cannot sleep;
And, as they hear, the gracious dew doth steal
Into their soul more deep.

Or some young heart, that hath been kept awake
By chance, or by his guardian angel's skill
Some serious thoughts unto himself may take
From sounds so dread and still.

If there be none to hear, no hymn of praise,
Or voice of prayer, to join thy chant be given,
There is no sleep above, and thou mayest raise
Thy patient chimes to Heaven.

F. W. Faber.

ON THE IMAGES OF THE NINE LEADEN MUSES UPON THE NEW PRINTING-HOUSE IN OXFORD

IN Oxford crowds of stupid bards are found,
Where of all places bright ones should abound;
Dull plodding blockheads, without sense or fire,
Toil hard for fame and to the bays aspire.
From deep logicians shallow wits commence,
Old dogs at rhyme, no matter for the sense.
If the lines flow but smooth and jingle well,
The man's a poet and his verses sell.
Nor is it strange, but rightly weigh the thing,
That our soft bards so indolently sing,
Or that the genius of the place is dead,
When our inspiring Muses breathe in Lead.
High on the stately dome, with harp in hand,
Their lumpish deities exalted stand,
Fixed as a public mark, that all might know
What wretched, heavy stuff they print below.

N. AMHERST.

THE MONCKIS COMPLAYNTE TO ALMA MATER TOUCHING DYVERSE NEWE MATTERS WROUGHTE IN OXENFORDE CYTIE

WHIE holie Modher, whie doth ruthlesse honde
Thus smyte thie gates * of hoarie majestie,
Working rude spoyle wheare science kept her stonde
Contente to flowte all gaudie fantasie ?
Stay, holie Modher, stay such vanitee,
Albe so trymm, this nought beseemeth thee.

No goodly sight of bedesmannes connynge celle,†
Wheare urchyn Wisdome crawled forth thie lappe,
No sturdie porche where valour's chylde did dwell,‡
Swilling his lore from out thie plenteous pappe !
Staie, holy Modher, staie soch vanitee,
Albe so trymm, this nought beseemeth thee.

At wonted noone thie trenchermenne unseene,§
At eve unheard thy chawnte of godlie tonge,‖
More godlie far soch holie chawnte I weene
Than mottrying clerke with messe ne said ne songe.
Staie, holie Modher, staie soch vanitee,
Albe so trymm, this nought beseemeth thee.

Nyghte's sterrie hoste in steadie path doth byde,
Ne soffreth change thilk Lampe whyche ruleth daie;
O let not showe of mortals wytlesse pryde
Bedimm thie heavenlie course, sweet Sainct, wee praie;
Staie, holy Modher, staie all vanitee,
Ne be moe trymm than erste beseemed thee.

GEORGE HUDDESFORD.

From "The Wiccamical Chaplet," 1804.

* The city gates taken down. † Friar Bacon's study.
‡ Queen's College gateway, with Henry V.'s room.
§ Old dinner hour at 12 ; changed to 3 P.M. in 1792.
‖ Chanting in choirs abolished.

THE SHELLEY MEMORIAL IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD

Itaque testimonio estis vobismet ipsis ; quod filii estis eorum qui prophetas occiderunt.

THIS is not Shelley—this dead mask of Death !
Here is no marble Immortality,
But fleshly petrifaction. Could the breath
Come back to this, yet nevermore should he,
The stately spirit of full stature, deign
In this small corpse to lodge and live again.

This is not Shelley ! Have our eyes not seen
Shelley, the child of morning, with the light
Of Heaven about him, and a brow serene
As Orient noonday, smile on Death and Night,
As the unhappy sisters of man's sorrow,
That might not live to the bright human morrow ?

This marble but records Death's victory
In Death's own lying language ; who doth boast
That o'er all being he hath empery,
And nothing liveth when the breath is lost.
So cold, so white, he cries, your Shelley lay !
Such lifeless limbs ! Such heavy, soulless clay !

Where is his Immortality ? Ah, where ?
Is this the sky of Shelley ? These his stars ?
This small blue dome, as low, as near, as bare
As infant man believed it, and these sparse
Gold spangles ! Could ye mock our Shelley more
'Twixt him and Heaven than draw this tinsel o'er ?

Yet who here standing blames the sculptor's art?
So deftly moulded is each marble limb!
Such deathly languor lies on every part!
So like is this to what was left of him,
When the wave-wantons, tiring of a prey
Teased vainly, flung the emptied flesh away!

Not his the fault, the sculptor's! Is it ours
Who leave no more to Art her old domain
Of Fancy, and though sky and sea she scours,
No more allow her to present as plain
Her aery visions, or to unseen things
Lend bodies visible and birdlike wings?

She bears Egyptian bondage, set to make
No likeness but what workman souls may see
And test by finger-touch—the fowler's lake,
The fisher's riverside, the woodman's tree,
The face in soulless hours of common life,
The body naked for the surgeon's knife.

Where are her ancient glories, when to man
She brought a revelation all divine,
And opened his dull eyes, and bade him scan
Shy Nature, to discern why she did shine,
For all her sorrows, with so calm a light
And, through the outward, woke the inward sight?

Here had the Greek made plain in mortal form
The seed of the Immortals, the half-god;
Here had the Florentine shewn flesh all warm
With mystic fire-tints from the Rose of God;
The rudest missal-scribe, his rough child-way,
Had drawn the soul-shape 'scaping from the clay.

We only, lords of lightning and of light,
All Nature's magic working to our wand,
Are yet forbidden the most simple sight
Of the informing soul in sea or land,
In hills and clouds and the blue deeps above,
And woman's beauty and the face we love.

One was there, son of England, whom not yet
The dust of years hides deeply, who perchance
With visionary touch had made forget
This dead marred body, left but to enhance
The bright miraculous likeness upward drawn,
The unprisoned spirit springing to the Dawn.

But Blake, the last Prometheus, is no more,
And the dark Heaven has shut her gates again.
Turn to the sleeper here, if in the lore
He left us we may find some balm for pain,
May find him living, though this grey-hued Death
So grimly to his dying witnesseth.

There do we find him, with his young-god's face
For ever to the East—for ever sure
Of the delaying sunrise, and the grace
To dawn upon the dark earth, full and pure
And holy, though a hundred such as he
Should die in faith before that day shall be.

FRANCIS WILLIAM BOURDILLON (Worcester College).

THE SCHOLAR NAVVY—AN ANTICIPATION

BILL SMITH was a navvy of brawn and bone,
His sinews steel and his muscles stone ;
He plied the pick and he plied the spade,
And a nice little living it was he made.
His table groaned with the best of cheer ;
He feasted high on beef and beer ;
Care never entered his well-barred door ;—
What could the soul of man want more ?

Alas ! one evil day Bill heard
Of a place called Oxford. His soul was stirred.
A charming spot, they said—tall towers,
Grey quads, green grass, and a wealth of flowers,
Here one might lie, stretched out at ease,
On a velvet lawn, 'neath shady trees,
And wile the careless years away
With a can of beer and an old black clay.

He listened wistfully. "This," said he,
"Can scarce be meant for the likes of me.
You tell of a wonderful country which
Must be the preserve of the fortunate rich."
"No, no !" they cried. "In a long past day
Things used to be very much as you say ;
But a great reformer conceived a plan
To make it the home of the labouring man.
If you're tired of being a navvy, and sigh
For the cultured calm of the cloistered High,
Just say the word and you soon will be
A scholar of Corpus or B.N.C."

Bill's eyes, as he listened, grew keen and bright.
He flew to Paddington swift as light ;

And that same day ere the sun went down
He was tramping the High in a scholar's gown.
Four glorious golden years he trod
The well-worn flags of the Corpus quad ;
He studied *Homer* and *Vergil*, too,
And Plato's views on the Good and True ;
He read the *Ethics* and even rose
To Exercises in Attic prose ;
He learnt what Pericles thought of the Navy,
And never to use his knife for the gravy ;
He studied the points of the *getium jus*
And how to eat his asparagus.

At last, when he found himself B.A.'d,
Bill thought once more of the pick and spade ;
But his muscle had dwindled away, alack,
And stooping gave him a crick in the back.
He soon discovered with aching heart
He'd lost forever the navvy's art ;
So he tried for jobs of various kinds—
As beating carpets, or fixing blinds,
Or driving a bus, or a railway van,
Or being a general odd-job man.
But berths like these were beyond his reach
The one thing left for him was to teach.

Now he spends the livelong day
Teaching youngsters to work and play,
While most of the night his back he crooks
Correcting endless exercise books—
For which he earns just half what he made
As a first-class navvy with pick and spade.

G. K. Menzies.

FOR A VISITOR'S ALBUM

HERE in this world of to and fro,
That changes fast as youthful faces,
Say, amid all this varied show,
What Oxford's first and goodliest grace is.

The fragrant flowers on time-worn walls?
The storied pinnacles aglow
With sunset light? the panelled Halls?
The lime-trees' green and stately row?

The meadows, where soft seeding blooms
Float over seas of sunny yellow?
The high-roofed cloister with its tombs
Of old-world Commoner and Fellow?

Or these young lives—their mirth and folly,
Their joyous ease, their ardour frantic;
Tranquil and stormy, grim and jolly,
Dull prose and poesy romantic?

Friend, whatsoever scene you choose,
I know your painter's art will lend it
The golden light dull eyes refuse,
Will take this world of ours and blend it

With thoughts, your own, serene and sweet,
Forget the ugly, guard the fair,
And make of tower, hall and street
A dreamland city, past compare.

Oxford Magazine, 1899.

O! THE BONNY CHRIST CHURCH BELLS

O! THE bonny Christ Church Bells
One, two, three, four, five, six,
That ring so mighty sweet,
So wonderous great,
And trowle so merrily, merrily.

O the first and second Bell,
Which every day at four and ten
Cry come, come, come, come, come,
Come to prayers,
And y^e^ verger troops before y^e^ Deane.

Tingle, tingle, tingle
Says the little bell att 9
To call the beerers home;
But the devill a man
Will leave his Can
Till hee hears the mighty Tome.

Quoted by THOMAS BASKERVILLE (*circa* 1670).

WEST FRONT OF CHRIST CHURCH

Drawn by J. BUCKLER *and engraved by* G. HOLLIS

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ON GREAT TOM OF CH. CH.

BE dumb, ye infant chimes, thump not your mettle,
That ne'er out-ring a tinker and his kettle.
Cease, all you petty larums; for, to-day
Is young Tom's resurrection from the clay;
And know, when Tom rings out his knells,
The best of you will be but dinner-bells.
Old Tom's grown young again; the fiery cave
Is now his cradle that was erst his grave.
He grew up quickly from his mother earth,
For all you see was but an hour's birth.
Look on him well, my life I dare engage,
You ne'er saw prettier baby of his age.
Some take his measure by the rule; some by
The Jacob's-staff take his profundity;
And some his altitude; but some do swear
Young Tom's not like the Old. But, Tom, ne'er fear
The critical geometrician's line,
If thou as loud as e'er thou did ringst nine.
Tom did no sooner peep from underground
But straight Saint Marie's tenor lost his sound.
Oh how this May-pole's heart did swell
With full main sides of joy, when that crackt bell,
Choakt with annoy and's admiration,
Rung like a quart pot to the congregation.
Tom went his progress lately, and lookt o're
What he ne'er saw in many years before
But when he saw the old foundation,
With some like hope of preparation,
He burst with grief; and lest he should not have
Due pomp, he's his own bell-man to the grave;
And that there might of him be still some mention,
He carried to his grave a new invention.

They drew his brown-bread face on pretty gins,
And made him stalk upon two rolling-pins;
But Sander Hill swore twice or thrice by heaven,
He ne'er set such a loaf into the oven.
And Tom did Sanders vex, his Cyclops maker,
As much as he did Sander Hill, the baker.
Therefore, loud thumping Tom, be this thy pride,
When thou this motto shalt have on thy side:—
"Great world! one Alexander conquered thee,
And two as mighty men scarce conquered me."
Brave, constant spirit! none could make thee turn,
Though hanged, drawn, quartered, till they did thee burn.
Yet not for this, nor ten times more be sorry,
Since thou wast martyred for the Churches glory.
But for thy meritorious suffering,
Thou shortly shalt to heaven in a string;
And though we grieved to see thee thumped and banged,
We'll all be glad, Great Tom, to see thee hanged.

RICHARD CORBET.

[Tom was re-cast in 1681, and weighs 16,700 pounds. King, the Woodstock bell-founder, failed three times in the casting, which was eventually accomplished by Christopher Hudson.]

AUTUMN IN WADHAM GARDEN

HER passing seems to me more fair
Than all the pride of summer's hour :
Now, while the half-transfigured air
Flings splendour on the seeding flower

That only struggles not to die :—
So mute with meaning unexpressed,
So hushed for some great agony,
This garden still awaits a guest.

Here, on some spirit drawn apart
Shall fall her mantle and her flame,
To serve with undivided heart
A bride more beautiful than fame.

Stooping from heaven, with a smile
Shall he behold her, and obey :—
Some Aidan of a sunnier isle,
Some Francis of the fuller day.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE.

THE DREAM

WITH mellow, long, deliberate stroke
Great Tom the midnight silence broke,
And straightway with amœbic clang
The hundred bells of Oxford rang
A merry welcome, blithe and clear,
To usher in the new-born year.
I sat with sported oak—heigho !
How many, many years ago !
And snoozing in my great arm-chair
With nodding Homer nodded there.
Scarce had I sunk in slumber deep,
Scarce were my loosened limbs asleep,
When, daring *Mrs. Grundy's* frown,
And Vice, austere in cap and gown,
And all the Academic law,
Two maidens entered. One I saw
Was sad and solemn, and I caught
On her pale brow the cast of thought.
Her mien was noble; from her eyes
A great soul shone, Apollo-wise,
Irradiating all her face
With some sweet, subtle, nameless grace.
In gorgeous raiment, gaily slashed
With cloth of gold, the other flashed.
Bright diamonds glittering in her hair,
And on her breast were diamonds rare.
So gay her garb, so strong the light
That sparkled from those facets bright,
So rich and wonderful the lace
I had no thought to mark her face.
She stood beside me. "Follow me,
And fortune shall be thine," said she.

"For I am Trade, and in my hands
Is all the wealth of all the lands.
Fair palaces and gardens gay
To whom I love I give away,
With acres spreading broad ; a stud
Of thorough-breds of purest blood,
And flunkeys waiting in the hall
To do their master's bidding—all
That heart of man can want. Be mine,
And great possessions shall be thine."
Then spake the second : "I am Art :
On other things I set my heart :
I strive to win another goal ;
She loves the body I the soul.
With me thou shalt not, lord-like, fare
On dainty meats and vintage rare ;
Of things like this thy thoughts are few
When it is given to pursue
The Good, the Beautiful, the True.
Ennobling aims, ideals high,
These shall be thine"—
"Enough !" said I,
"The richer, though the poorer part
I choose me. I am thine, O Art."
To-night again, with sported oak,
I sit in Garden Court and smoke
Beside my dying fire, and hear
Big Ben boom in another year,
While endless bells take up the tale,
And bid the new-born infant hail.
Upon my knee a sheet lies fair—
For weeks it has been lying there
In faith and patient expectation

Awaiting Art and inspiration.
But she is fickle ; she delights
To win herself new proselytes,
The while she leaves me to my fate—
The terrors of an empty pate.
O mistress mine, when I reflect
How trade her minions doth protect,
How King of Corpus drives his pair,
And owns a mansion in Mayfair,
How Jones of Jesus entertains
The peerage on the best champagnes,
(Though King and Jones were utter fools,
And scarcely scrambled through their schools)—
How can I but regret the part
I chose in choosing you, O Art,
Upon that New Year's Eve—heigho,
How many, many years ago !

G. K. Menzies, 1902.

SATIRICAL AND POLEMICAL

Chronica si penses
Cum pugnant Oxonienses,
Post paucos menses
Volat ira per Angligenenses.

ANON.

What class in life, though ne'er so great,
With a good Fellowship can compare?
We still dream on at our old rate
Without perplexing care.

J. MILLER (1729).

Nebulo tamen improbus unum
Hoc bene molitur, quod si procerior arbor
Oxonii patulos diffundat in aethera ramos,
Protinus, "Exscindas," conclamat, "inutile lignum."
Scilicet arboribus (nec mirum) conscius Iste
Immortale odium intentat.

Dialogus in Theatro Sheldoniano (1773).

Lost as the lamp which glimmers on the tomb
He shines the meteor of the Common Room.

From "The Oxford Spy."

E'en Balaam's ass,
If he could pay the fee, would pass.

ANON.

PREFERMENT GOES BY FAVOUR

LOTH am I to rip up my nurse's shame
Or to accuse for this those schools of fame,
The Academies: yet for reformation
Of this abuse, I must reprove the fashion
Of divers seniors, which for private gain
Permit some ignorant ass, some dunce, attain
A scholar's or a fellow's place among 'em.
Some think, perhaps, of malice I do wrong 'em,
But the poor students know it to be true,
Which, wanting means, as often want their due.
Art was not thus rejected heretofore
But plenty now hath made a scholar poor.
Learning was wont to be the highest stair,
Upon whose top was fixed preferment's chair,
In which the best deserver was installed,
The worthiest man to highest honour called.
But now the world's altered; changèd is the mould
And learning's step is turned to massy gold.
To get preferment who doth now intend,
He by a golden ladder must ascend.
Thus cursèd gold doth bear so great a sway
That nurseries of learning do decay;
For not the means of taking our degrees
Are quite exempt from bribes; for double fees
A dunce may turn a Doctor and in state
Walk in his scarlet! Oh, unhappy fate!
When paltry pelf doth worthless ignorance
Unto the tip of learning's mount advance.

R. C. Gent. (? Rich. Corbet).

From "The Time's Whistle," 1614, Satire IV.

TO A DEBAUCHT UNIVERSITY A COMPLAINT AGAINST DRUNKENNESS

THY Sonnes (most famous mother) in old time
To quench their thirst Parnassus hill did climb.
Some of thy Sonnes now thinke that hill too steepe,
Their Helliconian springs doe lye more deepe.
Their study now is, where there is good drinke,
The Spigot is their Pen, strong beere their Inke.
I could with Democrit' laugh at this sinne,
If it in any other place had bin ;
But in a place where all should be decent,
A sinne so nastie, inconvenient,
So beastly, so absurd, worthy disdaine,
It straines me quite out of my merry straine.
I could with Heraclit' lament, and cry,
Or write complaints with wofull Jeremy.
Nay, much—much more, if that would expiate
What's past, or following follies extirpate.
Many rare wits hath it infatued,
Their climbing merits quite precipited,
And hopes of ancient houses ruined.
Fools and base sots this sinne hath made of them,
That by sobriety had beene brave men.
Yea I doe know, many wise men there be
Which for this dare not trust their sonnes with thee,
Fearing this Cerberus, this Dogge of Hell,
Within whose Ward all other follies dwell.
I hope thy Sister better lookes to hers
Indulgent Elis are thy officers,
If they will not assist my motion,
To apply Causticks and no Lotium ;

Deare Mother, on my knee I beg this boone,
Afford this inconvenient Vice no roome,
But whip it in thy Convocation
Or strip it of Matriculation.

R. Hayman (1628).
"*Quodlibets.*"

THE PLAGUE OF WOMEN AT OXFORD

WITH generous grief I mourn our Oxford's fate,
Her fading glories and declining state :
The Muses, banished by an Harlot-train,
In other lands renew the tuneful strain.
Homer and Virgil quit disgraced the field,
And to the skilful dancing-master yield.
Our Colleges grow elegantly dull,
Our Schools are empty, and our taverns full.
The gownèd youth dissolves in amorous dreams,
And pedantry to him all learning seems ;
He wastes his bloom in vanity and ease,
And his chief studies are to dress and please.
From place to place the dunghill-tribe I fly,
And strive, in vain, to shut them from my eye.
If through the lonely, smiling meads I stray,
And by the Charwel pace my thoughtful way,
Loud female laughters reach my distant ears,
Before my eyes the tawdry mantua glares ;
I shun the approaching sight, to madness wrought,
And loose in air the scattered train of thought.
If to the tavern social mirth invites,
With constant pain I spend the joyless nights ;
Scrawled on the glass I read the hated names,
While my swoln breast with indignation flames ;
The whining blockheads each his Toast assign,
And pall, with nauseous praise, the generous wine :
I fret, I rail, with angry bile I fume,
And broken pipes and glasses strew the room.
Nay if at church I bend the suppliant knee,
Nor then from their damned presence am I free;
The loathsome object even pursues me there,
I burst with fury in the midst of prayer.

Just as in fervent transports I expire,
And my soul mounts on wings of hallowed fire,
Some haughty, worthless minion meets my sight,
And checks devotion in its middle height.
With scorn upon each maudlin face I dwell,
And with a pious, silent madness swell.
When the loud organ to the anthem plays,
And through the various notes harmonious strays,
O ! how demure the listening harlots leer,
And drink the music in at either ear ;
How the sluts languish with deceitful pride,
And ogling drop the pretty head aside ;
In church they practise each new female air,
And to a playhouse turn the house of prayer.

N. Amherst (1718).

From "Strephon's Revenge: a Satire on the Oxford Toasts," inscribed to the author of "Merton Walks."

[Written in answer to "Merton Walks," by J. Day (published 1717), a dull enumeration of the reigning beauties of Oxford.]

JACOBITE OXFORD

ALAS! how changed! where now that Attic boast?
See! Gothic licence rage o'er all my coast.
See! Hydra Faction spread its impious reign,
Poison each breast, and madden every brain.
Hence frontless crowds that, not contend to fright
The blushing Cynthia from her throne of night,
Blast the fair face of day; and madly bold
To Freedom's foes infernal orgies hold;
To Freedom's foes, ah! see the goblets crowned!
Hear plausive shouts of Freedom's foes resound!
The horrid notes my refluent waters daunt,
The Echoes groan, the Dryads quit their haunt;
Learning, that once to all diffused her beam,
Now sheds by stealth a partial private gleam
In some lone cloister's melancholy shade,
Where a firm few support her sickly head.

WILLIAM MASON (of Cambridge, the friend of Gray).

From "Isis, an Elegy."

[It was in answer to this tirade that T. Warton wrote "The Triumph of Isis."]

WAKE, DOATING DRONE!

OH! Oxford, Oxford, vainly still endowed
With wealth and ease to lift thee from the crowd,
With opportunities too richly blest,
Why with slow step still lag behind the rest?
When wilt thou cease, with all thy pompous plan,
To waste on mummies what was meant for man,
With all thy learning, when wilt thou decide
That to be useful it must be applied?
Will no cup tempt thy lip, but that which stands
Cracked with old age, and worn by monkish hands?
Will no book please, unless begrimed with dust,
Worm-drilled its boards, its clasps ingrained with rust?
Is human life so long that there is time
To waste whole years upon a ding-dong chime,
Some book of metres, which would crutch in vain
A crippled chorus on its feet again,
Some tome on accents, crabbedly diffuse,
To fix their places, tho' unknown their use?
Oxford, awake! The land hath borne too long
The senseless jingling of thy drowsy song,
Seen her fond youth of empty sounds the dupe,
And trucked their birthright for a drop of soup.
Wake! doating drone, or ere thy dream be done,
Reform will snatch thee, as its car flies on,
And through the miry path, with whirlwind wheels,
Drag thee along, like Hector, by the heels.
The hum of men is up—strange voices now
Rise from the loom, the anvil and the plough—
The warning trump hath echoed long and loud,
Yet hear'st thou not, nor markst the gathering crowd.
Still as the wing of soft oblivion throws

Its silken shadow o'er thy deep repose,
And while thy nostrils, like the Cyclops', snort
The mingled fumes of prejudice and port,
Years have flown by, and others watch have kept,
With nimbler feet have speeded whilst thou slept.

GEORGE COX (New College).

From "Black Gowns and Red Coats," 1834
Addressed to the Duke of Wellington.

A VISION OF A REFORMED OXFORD

'TIS mine to wish that Science, just and plain,
Should drop her errors and extend her reign ;
Pure Mathematics fix the mind of youth
On the firm basis of eternal truth ;
Be scanned Weight's, Number's, Figure's, Motion's laws,
And from the vast effects inferred th' Almighty Cause ;
Sublime Philosophy shine clear, and fraught
With power of words, and energy of thought,
Yet none be deemed, in learning's seat, to waste
Their hours on classic elegance and taste ;
On Helicon's fair dreams, whose soft control
Refines all worldlier feelings of the soul !
Thus formed and strengthened, Science rears her throne,
By sceptics dreaded and to fools unknown.
O Oxford ! mighty with majestic towers,
Lovely with shade of academic bowers,
Thus may'st thou draw new dignity from age,
Thus claim thy part in history's brightest page,
Defend Religion and instruct the State,
The first in wisdom as the first in weight.
Heroes shall hence and legislators rise,
Bold in the field and in the council wise ;
Here native bards to future time convey
The mighty magic of the moral lay ;
Here England's sons, while life is fresh and bright,
With virtue, peace ; with study, blend delight ;
Mature taste, feeling, principle, and raise
With feats of eld, the fire of younger days.
Then men and patriots, deaf to factious brawls,
Foremost, where honour or their country calls,
To her and heaven their ripened talents yield
And run their high career on glory's ample field !

As, first, the rower's inexperienced strength
Plies the small skiff the safer Cherwell's length ;
Soon, proud of skill, assembled crowds he braves,
Where silver Isis boasts her broader waves.
What time his course the summer sun hath stayed,
And softer evening spreads the gathering shade,
While beauty walks the banks, and music round
Sheds o'er the heart the enchanting power of sound,
And gazers, from each hill and college, stand,
Cheer their own boat and anxious urge to land,
When back from Iffley the swift oars are heard,
Dash in the stream, though scarce the stream is stirred—
The steersman shouts, the gallant crew rows on,
And toil is pleasure if the race be won.
As here young Isis rolls, in laughing pride,
Through classic scenes her unpolluted tide,
With more of beauty than of grandeur flows,
Sounds but of joy disturb the calm repose,
Soon ships and commerce crowd the mightier streams
And deck the bosom of majestic Thames.

J. S. Boone.

"*The Oxford Spy*," 1823. *Dialogue II.*

THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

From a Drawing by BUCKLER *in* 1816

To face p. 308

OXFORD'S DEADLY CALM

HEAR me, hoary Heads of Houses! ye whose weekly
wisdoms meet
In reactionary councils and somniferous retreat—
Many years have fed your grass-plots, many annual
lectures shewn,
Cardwell's blaze of erudition lighting up the Parian
stone,
Whilst ye slumbered, little caring for the questions of
the day,
As the sage who sleeps on folios little cares for
Thackeray.
Hear me! 'tis the nation's noontide! up, your heavy
thoughts dismiss!
Rouse ye, like the sleeping beauty! wake them, Derby,
with a kiss!
Poets tell of spells for slumber strong the soul and sense
to charm,
Magic raiment, fairy-fabric, webs which paralyse the arm:
Sure scholastic was the mantle—see, whoe'er the gown
has won,
Sleeps, for ever metamorphosed to a dormouse or a Don.
Dreary dreams of pedant's wisdom live within the full
costume,
But the power of mind is blighted, lower puny passions
bloom.
Greet the lists! the prize is worthy! see, to Oxford
crowding press,
Tory novelists and statesmen, jostling for the slumbrous
dress!
Come the patrons, guests and shadows—talent, wealth
and wit from town—
See to deferential bearing smoothed the academic frown!

Hark! the blushing youthful Pindars pipe their pretty Pythian lays,
Malmesbury, the diplomatic, gulps the sickly sweets of praise!
Wherefore not the foreign service? rival creeds are here at home,
Doctors hailing Disraeli, mingle Caucasus and Rome!
From the roof encircling benches flies the plaudit, flies the joke,
On the rostrum solemn speakers every pompous phrase invoke,
Ponderously roll the periods, and a Latin speech relates,
With superlatives familiar, how abuse defies the fates;
How the sounds which spare the nation spare the dull scholastic ear,
Tells how Oxford knows no tempest, needs no hope and fears no fear.
Paeans o'er the signs of sickness! nay, o'er Oxford's deadly calm,
Speak a funeral oration, sing a penitential psalm!
Choking in the sultry stillness, raise the renovating storm!
'Mid the swell of thousand voices, peal the clarion of Reform!

From "A Song of the Encaenia."
Respectfully dedicated to the Chancellor, 1853.

ON A PROPOSAL TO EXCLUDE FROM CONGREGATION ALL NON-ACADEMICAL MEMBERS

MY scheme is this: remove the votes of all
The residents that are not Liberal—
Leave the young Tutors uncontrolled and free
And Oxford then shall see—what it shall see.
What next? Why then, I say, let Convocation
Be shorn of all her powers of legislation.
But why stop there? Let us go boldly on—
Sweep everything beginning with a "Con"
Into oblivion! Convocation first,
Conservatism next, and, last and worst,
"Concilium Hebdomadale" must,
Consumed and conquered, be consigned to dust.

1866.

HYMN TO THE INFINITE BY FULL CHORUS OF CLOUDY PROFESSORS

THE voice of yore
Which the breezes bore
Wailing aloud from Paxo's shore,
Is changed to a gladder and livelier strain,
For the great God Pan is alive again,
He lives and he reigns once more.
With deep intuition and mystic rite
We worship the Absolute Infinite,
The Universe-Ego, the Plenary-Void,
The Subject-Object identified,
The great Nothing-Something, the Being-Thought,
That mouldeth the mass of Chaotic Nought,
Whose beginning unended and end un-begun
Is the One that is All and the All that is One.
Hail Light with Darkness joined!
Thou Potent Impotence!
Thou Quantitative Point
Of all Indifference!
Great Non-Existence, passing into Being,
Thou two-fold Pole of the Electric One,
Thou Lawless Law, thou Seer all Unseeing,
Thou Process, ever doing, never done!
Thou Positive Negation!
Negative Affirmation!
Thou great Totality of everything
That never is, but ever doth become,
Thee do we sing
The Pantheist's King,
With ceaseless bug, bug, bug, and endless hum, hum, hum.

H. L. MANSEL (1852).

From "Phrontisterion," or "Oxford in the 19th Century."

A DEFENCE OF OXFORD

HOW shall the genuine Bard escape from Fools,
That judge by narrow, or by partial Rules?
A thousand witlings maul his mangled Name,
And yelping Critics hunt him out of fame.
Nay, Censure so perversely plays her Tricks,
That she will measure Wit by Politics,
And some with hollow Heads, but Faces big,
Will almost swear Apollo is a Whig!
Men of true Genius and of real Use,
Can Oxford, that vile Nazareth, produce?
And yet impartial Sarum * did declare,
Once on a Time there was one Scholar there!
Oxford! my Joy! my Wonder! and my Boast!
My constant Triumph and my daily Toast!
O let thy Son his willing Duty pay,
And grateful pour the Tributary Lay;
Rescue thy Fame from Slander thrown by Slaves
And snatch thy Honour from the Gripe of Knaves.

W. HAWKINS (Professor of Poetry).

Fellow of Pembroke and friend of Dr. Johnson.
From "An Essay on Genius."

* Bishop Burnet.

ADVICE TO ONE ENTERING OXFORD

A SHREWD old man, on Isis' margin bred,
Smiled at my warmth, and shook his wig, and said :—
"Youth will be sanguine, but before you go,
Learn these plain rules, and treasure, when you know.
Wisdom is innate in the gown and band ;
Their wearers are the wisest of the land ;
Science, except in Oxford, is a dream,
In all things, Heads of Houses are supreme.
Proctors are perfect, wheresoe'er they be,
Logic is Reason in Epitome :
Examiners, like kings, can do no wrong,
All modern learning is not worth a song.
Passive obedience is the rule of right,
To argue, or oppose, is treason quite.
Mere common sense would make the system fall ;
Things are worth nothing, words are all in all."

JAMES SHERGOLD BOONE.
"*The Oxford Spy.*"

THE OXFORD ARGO
BY AN OXFORD DIVINE

ARISE, my soul, and bear thee
Aloft on Eagle's wing;
Awake, my heart, prepare thee,
Burst forth at length and sing.

A gentler inspiration
Should Nature's God deny,
Yet Righteous Indignation
Shall sterner stuff supply.

Go see where ancient Isis
Pours down her classic tide,
Where many a turret rises
Where Oxford sits in pride,

At many a hall and college,
By many a traitorous stroke,
The Tree of Christian Knowledge
Falls like a forest oak.

The deadly Upas springing,
From Christchurch' cloistered pile,
Her poison fast is flinging
Throughout Britannia's Isle.

While branch to branch united
With Oriel's sister tree,
She rides on air, delighted
Her work of death to see.

The spreading boughs—what numbers
  Lie heedless underneath,
Not dreaming that their slumbers
  Must prove the sleep of death !

Soon, soon the tainted breezes
  Come stealing o'er the brain,
The soft delusion pleases,
  They sleep, nor wake again.

Cleft from her noxious branches
  They've formed a keel and mast,
The framework swift advances,
  A Bark's complete at last.

They've found a wondrous pilot,
  They've found a ready crew ;
O may it ne'er be my lot
  To sail with hearts untrue !

There's Newman wise and simple,
  How saintly is his smile !
Alas ! beneath each dimple
  Lurk treachery and guile.

By him the light imparted
  Makes Churchmen ready quite
Sound-headed and sound-hearted
  To swear that wrong is right.

There's Pusey's gloomy visage,
  His downcast eyes and head,
The foremost man of this age
  To prove his God is bread.

There's Hook, that priest judicious,
  There's Bloomfield, spruce and prim,
One looks ahead suspicious,
  One keeps the boat in trim.

There's Philpotts seven times heated
  As ne'er he was before,
Half surpliced, half unseated,
  Tugs at his broken oar.

Beside him gentle Bagot,*
  Absorbed in slumber seems;
He dreams of fire and faggot,
  But seldom tells his dreams.

See 'neath his apron creeping,
  The grave-denying Nine!
Graves for their names to sleep in
  Kind Muse, to each assign!

There's Keble feebly chaunting,
  There's Palmer cursing sore
The Principle that's wanting
  To keep him safe on shore.

There's philosophic Sewell,
  Morality's bright gem;
Convinced that all would do well
  Might He but pilot them!

Non-natural, but real,
  There's Balliol's *honest knave*,†
Emits a blast "Ideal"
  To puff them o'er the wave.

* Bishop of Oxford. † Ward's "Ideal Church."

By heathen gods directed
There's Williams at the sail,
In paper bags collected
Holds back the "Gospel gale,"

Else from its prison bounding,
Unfettered, strong and free,
The boldest heart confounding,
'Twould whelm them in the sea.

See, see, the vessel's ready,
Her mainsail woos the breeze,
And all her hands are steady,
Their hearts are all at ease.

But hark, while thus delaying,
The "Apostolic Lyre,"
Some sainted Orpheus playing
Doth every heart inspire.

Fired by the minstrel's cunning
Their anchor straight they weigh ;
And round their capstan running
Chaunt as they heave away.

HENRY BELLENDEN BULTEEL (1847).

THE OXFORD VISION

IN one thousand six-hundred and eighty-one
The King and the Commons to Oxford did run
Where Harris' Plot blowne up like a gun,
With a fa-la, fa-la.

Nor Christ Church, nor Guards, had power to keep
Old Rowley and Kitty from Spirits in their sleep,
For Godfrey's Ghost thro' the curtains would peep,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

Nor godly Dean Fell, tho' Bishop to boot
(As sure as two twopences make up a groat),
Had magical power sufficient to do't,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

The evening before the Parliament fled
(As Kitty herself to many hath said)
A Protestant Ghost sat down on her bed,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

When first he approached she thought it was Bealing
More pleased with his touch than Rowley's dull feeling,
She thrust out her hand and needs must be feeling,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

But soon his cold grasp convinced her mistake,
And Majesty then like a custard did quake,
When Godfrey's Ghost in this manner spake,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

"My blood which you spilt must now be repaid,
I come for that Justice which has been delayed,
Your murders and treasons are all now betrayed,"
With a fal-la, fal-la.

This said, he departed and left her full sorry
When morning was come she related this story,
To Rowley and Halifax, Seymour and Lowry,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

Being Parliament sick she was troubled within,
Tho' while 'twas concealed she thought it no sin,
And were there occasion could do so again,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

Thus, stead of three Doctors, the men named before
Were sent to consult with which way to restore
A murderous wife and a treacherous w——e,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

At length they agreed Dom Com should disband,
Lest Harris should tell what was done in the Strand
And show what a monarch rules over this land,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

A kind-hearted Brother bewitched by a fool,
Who spent all his time in the Jesuits' school,
Too wicked, too rotten, too silly to rule,
With a fal-la, fal-la.

ANONYMOUS.

RUSTICA ACADEMIAE OXONIENSIS NUPER REFORMATAE DESCRIPTIO IN VISITATIONE FANATICA, 1648

RUMORE nuper est delatum,
Dum agebamus ruri,
Oxonium iri reformatum
Ab iis qui dicti Puri.*

Decrevi itaque confestim
(Obstaculis sublatis)
Me oculatum dare testem
Hujusce novitatis.

Ingressus urbem juxta morem
Scrutandi desiderio,
Nil praeter maciem, et squalorem
Foedissimum comperio.

A Decio in specum jacti,†
Qui tantum dormierunt,
Post saeculum expergefacti,
Tot mira non viderunt.

Erectas illi crebras Cruces
Et Templa conspexere,
Quae prisci pietatis duces
Tunc primum construxere.

Nos autem sanctiora nuper
Incidimus in saecula,
Qui tollunt ista, tanquam super-
stitionis symbola.

* The Puritans. † The Seven Sleepers.

Ad Scholas primum me trahebat
Comitiorum norma,
Queis olim quisque peragebat
Solenniter pro forma.

Expecto Regios Professores
Comparuere nulli,
Nec illic adsunt Inceptores,
Nec togae, nec cuculli.

Calcavi atrium quadratum,
Quo juvenum examen
Confluxit olim ; video pratum
Quod densum tegit gramen.

Adibam lubens scholam Musices,
Quam feminae et joci
Ornassent pridem, sed tibicines
Jam nusquam erant loci.

Conscendo orbis illud decus,
Bodleio fundatore ;
Sed intus erat nullum pecus
Excepto janitore.

Neglectos vidi libros multos,
Quod minime mirandum ;
Nam inter bardos tot et stultos
There's few could understand 'em.

Dominico sequente die
Ad sacra celebranda,
Ad aedes propero Mariae
Nam Divae vox nefanda.

Tenebar mox intrandi metu,
Sollicitus ut ante,
Sed frustra prorsus, nullo coetu
Introitum negante.

Ingressus sedes senioribus
Togatis destinatas,
Videbam cocis et sartoribus,
Et lixis usurpatas.

Procancellarius recens prodit,*
Cui satis literarum,
Quod vero quisque probus odit
Est conscientiae parum.

Procuratores sine clavibus,
Quaerentibus ostendas ;
Bedellos novos sine stavibus,
Res protinus ridendas.

Suggestum conscendebat fungus †
Insulsa quaeque fundens,
So dull a fool was ne'er among us,
Pulvinar sic contundens.

Quicquid in buccam evenivit,
Minaci utens dextra,
Boatu magno effutivit,
Et nunquam fuit Extra.

* Dr. Reynolds, Dean of Ch. Ch., appointed Dean by the Presbyterians after Dr. Fell was ejected. Himself displaced by the Independents in 1651. Bishop of Norwich 1660.

† Dr. Stanton, Intrusive President of C.C.C.

Defessus hac Dulman-itate,
Decrevi venerandos,
Non adhuc pulsos civitate
Amicos visitandos.

Collegium petii Animarum,
Nunc proprie sic dictum,
Nam rerum hic corporearum
Vix quicquam est relictum.

Hic quaero virum * suavitate
Omnimodo politum ;
Responsum alibi ingrate
Custodem custoditum.

Ad Corpus Christi flecto gressum,
Qua brevitate possum ;
Jurares novis probris pressum,
Et furibus confossum.

Ecclesiam Chisti susque deque
Jactatam, mox et versam,
Et sobolem, heu, longe lateque
Percipimus dispersam.

Rogavi ubi sit orator,†
Divinae plane mentis ;
Proh facinus ! incarceratur
Facundae decus gentis.

Hinc domum peto Praecursoris,
Quem triste passum fatum,
Recenti narrant vi tortoris
Secundo decollatum.

* Dr. Sheldon, Warden of All Souls. † Dr. Hammond.

Tam sancto Praeside * cadente,
Discipuli recedunt,
Et cacodaemone † regente,
Nec bibunt jam nec edunt.

Heu ! pulchra domus, nuper laeta
Dulcissimis fluentis,
Nunc coeno penitus oppleta
Canalis putrescentis.

Adire nolui Trinitatem,
Quam nostis prope stare,
Haereticam societatem
Ne videar damnare.

Nam tanta desolatione
Quam quis nefandam dicet,
Occurrunt nusquam tres personae,
Scruteris usque licet.

Reverso tristis fertur casus,
Et miserandum omen
Collegii, cui Rubens Nasus
Prae foribus dat nomen.

Dederunt illi Principalem
Rectores hi severi,
Distortis oculis, ‡ et qualem
Natura vult caveri.

* Dr. Baylie. † Cheynell or Channel.
‡ Squinting Dan Greenwood, who succeeded Dr. Radcliffe.

Mox Aedes ingredi conatus
Non unquam senescentes,
Stupescens audio ejulatus *
Horrenda sustinentis.

Quod dulce nuper domicilium
Ingenuis alendis ;
Nunc merum est ergastulum
Innocuis torquendis.

Ad flentem me recipio tandem
Flens ipse Magdalenam ;
Et gemens video eandem
Vacuitate plenam.

Quae felix dudum ornabatur
Frequentibus alumnis,
Quae suaviter innitebatur
Doctissimis columnis ;

Nunc lapsis fulcris, queis vigebat,
Videres humi stratam,
Et prole densa, qua gaudebat,
En misere orbatam.

Hae sedes, comptiores Musae
Quas habuere sibi,
Nunc densis tenebris offusae
Et Zim et Ozim ibi. †

* New College was used as a prison.

† "Wild beasts" and "doleful creatures." (Isaiah xiii. 21.)

Pro Praeside* (cui quenquam parem
Vix aetas nostra dedit)
En vobis stultum capularem †
Ad clavum jam qui sedet.

Quam vereor! ne diro omine
Septem regrediantur
Daemonia, divino numine
Quae quondam pellebantur.

Quocunque breviter flectebam,
Aut dirigebam visum,
Id totum induit, quod videbam,
Aut lacrymas aud risum.

Ingemui, dum viros video
Doctissimos ejectos,
Et contra, alternatim rideo,
Stolidulos suffectos.

O probam reformandi artem!
Quae medicina datur?
Quae curat, ut curamus partem,
Cum totum exscindatur.

Quadratos homines quae jubet
Et doctos extirpandos,
Et nebulones, prout lubet,
Rotundos ‡ surrogandos.

* Dr. Oliver. † Dr. Goodwin, nicknamed Dr. Ninecaps.
‡ Roundheads.

Collegia petis? Leges duras
Habes; nil fas videre,
Praeter aedes et structuras;
Scholares abiere.

Culinas illic frigescentes,
Capellas sine precibus,*
In cellis cernas sitientes,
Et aulas sine Messibus.

In templis quaeris conciones,
Aut quicquid est decorum?
Habebis haesitationes
Extemporaneorum.

Interea quid oppidani,
With all their quaint devices,
Qui novas hasce (male sani)
Exoptavere vices.

Erecta cornua gerebant,
Dum montes hi parturiunt;
Et nunc fastidiunt, quae volebant,
Et fortiter esuriunt.

Heu! ingens rerum ornamentum,
Et aevi decus pridem,
Quo tandem pacto hoc perventum,
Ut idem non sit idem?

* April 15, 1648. Use of the Common Prayer forbidden.

Nam vix a quoquam, quod narratur
Obventum olim somnio,
Compertum erit, si quaeratur
Oxonium in Oxonio.

John Allibond, D.D. (Rector of Bradwell, Glos.).

"A witty man of Magdalene College," according to Wood. Master of Magdalene School. "The Rustica Descriptio" was twice printed in 1648.

[The "Blessed Parliament" had in 1647 passed an ordinance "for the better regulating and reformation of the University of Oxford," and appointed twelve visitors. They were given power to imprison those who refused to give up, on demand, the University and College muniments. Dr. Fell was the first victim. Then the Earl of Pembroke came down in April 1648 and expedited matters. In one day (May 15) 334 fellows were expelled, 60 on June 29 and 73 on July 8. "An almost general riddance was made of the loyal University of Oxford." Allibond describes what he saw on Oct. 8 of the same year. Cromwell went to Oxford on May 17, 1649, and made himself Chancellor of the University. *Cf.* the ballad "The Protecting Brewer."]

OXFORD ALE AND ALE-HOUSES

Home, scollers! Drawer, what's to pay?

"Parnassus Biceps."

Here's none of your new-fangled stuff brought from Vigo,
This comes from the cellar where Michael and I go.

From a set of Brasenose Ale-verses, 1709.

Such ancient hospitality there rests
In yours, as dwelt in the first Grecian breasts,
Whose kindness was religion to their guests.

J. Dryden.

Veni Oxon, cui comes
Est Minerva, fons Platonis,
Unde scatent peramœne
Aganippe, Hippocrene.
Totum fit Atheniense,
Immo cornu Regimense.

Rich. Braithwaite.

From "Drunken Barnabee's Journal."

At Magdalen the "Proof" though the butler may bring it
Fresh-foaming and strong from its butts round and deep,
Yet since 'tis not blessed with a poet to sing it,
Must sink to the grave where the songless shall sleep.
But as long as our Ale its old strength doesn't weaken,
And the Nose our divine inspiration shall be,
They may talk as they will of their Merton "Archdeacon"—
Brasenose Ale is the stuff, sirs, for you and for me.

A. B. Shepherd.

Then bring the brimming bumpers forth,
The deuce take duns and ploughs!
And let the nut-brown nectar froth
As Thames before our bows,
And take a pull as long and strong
As that that shoots our eight along!

A. J. Evans.

But Brasenose Tower and Brasenose Ale
And Brasenose friendships last for ever.

A. B. Shepherd.

FIE, SCHOLLERS, FIE!

FIE, Schollers, fie, have you such thirsty souls
To swill, quaffe and carouse in Sambourne's bowls?
Tell me, mad youngsters, what do you believe
It cost good Sambourne nothing to be Sheriffe?
To spend so many beeves, so many weathers,
Maintaine so many Caps, so many Feathers.
Againe, is malt so cheap this pinching year
That you should make such havock of his beer?
I hear you are so many that you make
Most of his men turn Tapsters for your sake,
And that when he even at the Bench doth sit,
You snatch the meat from off the hungry spit.
You keep such hurly burly, that it passes,
Ingurgitating sometimes whole half-glasses.
And some of you, forsooth, are grown so fine
Or else so saucy as to call for wine;
As if the Sheriffe had put such men in trust
As durst draw out more wine than needs they must.
In faith, in faith, it is not well, my Masters,
Nor fit that you should be the Sheriffe's tasters.
It were enough, you being such gormondizers,
To make the Sheriffs henceforth turn arrant misers.
Remove the Size, to Oxford's foul disgrace,
To Henley on the Thames, or some such place.
He never had complained had it been
A petty Firkin or a Kilderkin;
But when a Barrel daily is drunk out,
My Masters, then 'tis time to look about.
Is this a lye? Trow ye, I tell you no,
My Lord High Chancelor was informed so.
And oh, what would not all the bread in Town
Suffice to drive the Sheriff's liquor down,

But he in hampers must it from hence bring,
Oh most prodigious and most monstrous thing!
Upon so many loaves of home-made bread,
How long might he and his two men have fed?
He would no doubt the poor they should be fed
With the sweet morsells of his broken bread.
But when that they poor soules for bread did call,
Answer was made, "The Schollers eate up all:"
And when for broken beer they craved a cup,
Answer was made, "The Schollers drunk it up."
And thus I know not how they change the name,
Out-did the deed and long-tale bore the blame.

From "Parnassus Biceps," 1656.

ON JOHN DAWSON, THE BUTLER AT CHRIST CHURCH

DAWSON the Butler's dead. Although I think
Poets were ne'er infused with single drinke
I'll spend a farthing Muse ; some watry verse
Will serve the turne to cast upon his hearse.
If any cannot weepe among us here,
Take off his pott and so squeeze out a tear ;
Weepe, O his cheeses, weepe till yee bee good,
Ye that are dry or in the sun have stood.
In mossy coats and rusty liveries mourne,
Until like him to ashes you shall turne.
Weep, O ye barrels, let your drippings fall
In trickling streams ; make waste more prodigal
Than when our drinke is badde, that John may flote
To Styx in beere, and lift upp Charon's boate
With wholesome waves. And as our conduits run
With clarett at a Coronation,
So lett our channells flow with single tiffe,
For John, I hope, is crownde. Take off your whiffe,
Yee men of Rosemary ! Now, drinke off all,
Remembering 'tis a Butler's funeral.
Had he bin master of good double beere,
My life for his, John Dawson had beene here.

? W. Strode or R. Corbet.

OXFORD ALE-HOUSES

HAPPY the man, who, void of cares and strife,
In silken or in leathern purse retains
A Splendid Shilling ; he nor hears with pain
New oysters cry'd, nor sighs for chearful ale ;
But with his friends, when nightly mists arise,
To Juniper's Magpye * or Town Hall * repairs,
Where, mindful of the nymph, whose wanton eye
Transfixed his soul and kindled amorous flames,
Chloe or Phillis, he each circling glass
Wisheth her health and joy and equal love.
Meanwhile he smokes, and laughs at merry tale,
Or pun ambiguous or conundrum quaint.

J. PHILIPS.
Opening of "The Splendid Shilling."

* Two noted ale-houses in Oxford, 1700.

OXFORD ALE

HAIL, Ticking! surest guardian of distress!
Beneath thy shelter, pennyless, I quaff
The cheerful cup, nor hear with hopeless heart
New oysters cry'd: tho' much the poet's friend,
Ne'er yet attempted in poetic strain,
Accept this tribute of poetic praise!
No Proctor thrice with vocal heel alarms
Our joys secure, nor deigns the lowly roof
Of pot-house snug to visit: wiser he
The splendid tavern haunts, or coffee-house
Of James or Juggins, where the grateful breath
Of loathed tobacco ne'er diffused its balm;
But the lewd spendthrift, falsely deemed polite—
While steams around the fragrant Indian bowl—
Oft damns the vulgar sons of humbler Ale.
In vain—the Proctor's voice arrests their joys,
Just fate of wanton pride and loose excess.
Nor less by day delightful is thy draught,
All-powerful Ale! whose sorrow-soothing sweets
Oft I repeat in vacant afternoon,
When tattered stockings crave my mending hand,
Not unexperienced; while the tedious toil
Slides unregarded. Let the tender swain
Each morn regale on nerve-relaxing tea,
Companion meet of languor-loving nymph!
Be mine each morn with eager appetite
And hunger undissembled, to repair
To friendly buttery; there on smoaking crust
And foaming ale to banquet unrestrained,
Material breakfast! Thus in ancient days
Our ancestors robust, with liberal cups

Ushered the morn, unlike the squeamish sons
Of modern times; nor ever had the might
Of Britons brave decayed, had thus they fed,
With British Ale improving British worth.

From "The Oxford Sausage."

BRASENOSE ALE

ALL ye, who round the buttery hatch
Eager await the opening latch
Our barrels to assail;
Come, listen while in pleasing gibe
The rare ingredients I describe,
Which float in Brasenose Ale.

Guiltless alike of malt and hop
Our buttery is a druggist's shop
Where quassia's draughts prevail;
Alum the muddy liquor clears
And mimic wormwood's bitter tears
Compose our Brasenose Ale.

All ye who physic have professed,
Sir Kit * and Poticary West,
Your practice gone bewail!
The burning mouth, the temple's throb,
Sick stomach and convulsive sob
Are cured by Brasenose Ale.

As poisons other poisons kill,
So, should we with convivial skill
Old Syms's † wine assail,
Or Latimer's immortal tun,
"Herbert" ycleped or "Abingdon,"
We're cured by Brasenose Ale.

The fair Cheltenia's opening salt
Must yield to our factitious malt;
What double sconce can fail?

* Sir Christopher Pegge. † An Oxford wine merchant.

But if you want some tonic stuff,
You readily will find *quant. suff.*
A gill of Brasenose Ale.

Mysterious as the Sibyl's leaves,
The battels are which each receives
But, freshmen, cease to rail!
You're fed and physicked; in your bills
Each week is vinegar of squills,
Bark, salts and Brasenose Ale.

Oh, that our Bursar would consent
To give the bottled porter vent
Porter beloved by Dale; *
Smuggled no more by Joey's † stealth,
It would improve the College health,
Well scoured by Brasenose Ale.

My muse, a half reluctant prude,
In dudgeon vile George Smith pursued,
Afraid his verse should fail;
When next the annual Ode he woos,
May he invoke a different Meux,
T' improve our Brasenose Ale.

THOMAS DUNBAR.
Fellow of B.N.C., and Keeper of Ashmolean.

* Fellow of B.N.C.
† Jos. Hodgkinson, Fellow of B.N.C.

VIEW IN BRASENOSE QUADRANGLE

Drawn by J. M. W. TURNER *and engraved by* J. BASIRE

From the Oxford Almanac of 1805

To face p. 340

BRASENOSE ALE

WITH laughter loud and trickling tears
My memory brings before me
The frantic hopes, the foolish fears
The odd adventures of the years
Which Time has wafted o'er me.

Oh ! Brasenose Ale, I shrewdly guess,
You, if you have a conscience,
To many blunders must confess,
To many hours of idleness
And failures in Responsions.

But then, again, no doubt could you
Tell me a cheerful story
Of cricket triumphs not a few
Of bumps achieved by gallant crew
And gowns put on with glory.

What gleeful evenings you inspired !
What festive little dinners !
How often was your aid required
To celebrate the speed untired
Of fleet-foot Brasenose winners !

How oft you helped us at the boats
For which we have to thank you !
How many high and tuneful notes
Did you elicit from the throats
Of gentlemen who drank you !

To make an old quotation new—
"Beer is than water thicker" ;
Yet I must say, "good-bye" to you,
"Good-bye, my friend so tried and true,
Incomparable liquor !" T. HUMPHRY WARD (1869).

BOTLEY ALE

GIVE a Scholar of Oxford a pot of sixteen
And put him to prove that an ape hath no tail,
And sixteen times better his wit will be seen,
If you fetch him from Botley a pot of Good Ale.

From "Pills to Purge Melancholy," 1661.

UPON THE SHERIFF'S BEERE

THE Sheriffe of Oxford late is grown so wise
As to reprieve his Beere till next assize;
Alas! 'twas not so quick, 'twas not so heady,
The Jury sate and found it dead already.

ANONYMOUS.

LIGHTER VERSE

Queis sunt velveticae manicae, decora alta, superbam
Queis circum currit purpura nigra togam,
Qui solidis pollent aetatis viribus, atque
Undique solliciti lumina acuta ferunt?
Hi, rigido instructi Censorum munere, curant
Servari mores, et data jura coli,
Nec labor hic gravis est; adeo bene nata juventus
Leges rite sequi sponte volensque solet.

M. Aubry, 1795.

ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ORIEL COLLEGE

I

YE antique walls, ye portals old,
Abode of High Research,
Whose ampler bounds will soon (I'm told)
Confront St. Mary's Church,
Where Dignity and Comfort vie
To decorate your Table High,
While alien dons, a starveling crew,
Each eve regard with envious view
These highly-favoured scenes
(Themselves by fate compelled to chew
The Magdalen husks, the scraps of New,
The mouldy crusts of Queen's):—
Blest spot! where childlike learning sits
Remote from worldly cares,
And leaves to skilled financiers its
Pecuniary affairs,
Or taking Mr. Beit's advice,
Is taught to choose with judgment nice
And purchase at a trifling price,
Remunerative shares!

II

Yet when we dream our happy state
Of human woes is rid,
Still is there left by envious Fate
Amari aliquid,
For what avails the lengthened feast
And what th' augmented pay?
From North and South and West and East,
Like eagles to their prey,

From Canada, from New South Wales,
Where'er the British tongue prevails,
Where Yankees spurn the tyrant's curb,
Where'er the German compound verb
Delights the listening ear,
All, all alike our peace disturb,
All, all assemble here!
And who are we to grant degrees
To persons eminent like these?

III

Then though they come in shoals and scores
From lands of various names,
Though Murrumbidge daily pours
His waters in the Thames,
Though Cornstalks stalking in the Corn
Affright th' unwonted Don,
And men in Patagonia born
Surprise the Bursch from Bonn;
Though from each State Columbia's soil
Supplies an undergrad,
And all Australia come to boil
Its billy in the quad,
Not mine decanally to cope
With students from thy Cape, Good Hope,
Or Germans on the Spree,
Britannia's youth supplies a scope
Sufficient quite for me,
Or, if compelled for Mods. or Greats
Colonial undergraduates
With classic lore to cram,

Full blest I'll deem their happy lot
Who by capitalists forgot
Inhabit some sequestered spot
Besides the waves of Cam.

A. Godley.

DOCTRINAE SEDES

WHEN Pleasure rules in Learning's realm
With Heads of Houses to escort her,
And youth directs an errant helm
In "Shorts" that every year grow shorter,
When Scholars "have their People up"
(A plea that everything excuses)
And quaff the gay convivial cup
Where once they wooed the classic Muses.

When men who used to come at nine
Are "indisposed" (a known condition)
And Brown has several aunts to dine
And cannot do his composition,
When Tompkins, once a studious lad,
"Desires most humbly to express a
Sincere regret he has not had
Time to complete his weekly essay."

When Lecturers have lost their use,
Because the youth they idly prate to
Has other things whereon to muse
Than mere Thucydides or Plato—
(You think, perhaps, he's taking notes?
Mistaken dreams? too well I know he
Is speculating on the boats
Or thinking of a rhyme to Chloe).

Then seek with me some calmer scene,
Where wines are hushed, where banjoes mute are;
There, careless though they burn the Dean
And immolate the Senior Tutor,

FRIAR BACON'S STUDY AND GRAND PONT (FOLLY BRIDGE), 1780

To face p. 350

We'll muse in solitude, until
  June and the Long once more disbands 'em
Then, William, pay my washing bill,
  And call at once my usual hansom.

A. Godley.

VALDE RETRO SATHANAS!

[A meditation suggested by Mr. Carnegie's decision that "the present endowed fellowships at Oxford and Cambridge are too highly paid to conduce to study."]

I

"MY lot is low: I lecture in
A simple edifice of tin:
Scant is its space, its plant is small,
The tin that decks its lowly wall
Is not bestowed on me:
To give the food which nature lacks
Two hundred pounds, less Income Tax,
Compose my annual fee.
My studious toils by day and night
Such ample guerdons bless:
They might be more—but then they might
Conceivably be less.
I murmur not, nor much repine
At my exiguous store;
Yet, when I cut expenses fine,
And never lunch and seldom dine,—
I could suppose a place was mine
Among the virtuous poor!"

II

Thus did I meditate, but O!
How little of ourselves we know!
For Mr. Carnegie declares
The salary I touch
(And who should know but millionaires?)
Is very far too much:—
Too opulent, he says to work,
Like Sybarite, or heathen Turk,

By wealth unnerved, by sloth unmanned,
Fed by the Bursar's generous hand,
Blest with two hundred several pounds
In each revolving year,
Our lives are mere continual rounds
Of skittles and of beer!
While Scotchmen read and Picts research
Impoverished like mice in church,
A toilsome impecunious crew,
For whom no yearly hundreds two
The faculties benumb—
We to this solitary end
Our intellectual efforts bend—
How best on luxuries to spend
That soul-destroying sum.

III

O let me ne'er in vicious ease
Deserve aspersions such as these,
Nor e'er permit my coffers full
My mental energies to dull,
Nor suffer all the gold I've got
Thy path, Research, to bar,
Nor tempted be to hire a yacht
Or buy a motor-car!
No—proof 'gainst wealth and all its snares
(Like you, like you, ye millionaires!)
With reverent eyes I'll view
Your proud contempt of pampering pelf,
Your love of knowledge for itself,
And form my aims on you.

A. Godley.

BALLADE OF THE SUMMER TERM:

BEING A PETITION, IN THE FORM OF A BALLADE, PRAYING THE UNIVERSITY COMMISSIONERS TO SPARE THE SUMMER TERM

WHEN Lent and Responsions are ended,
When May with fritillaries waits,
When the flower of the chestnut is splendid
And drags are at all of the gates,
(Those drags the philosopher "slates"
With a scorn that is truly sublime),*
Life wins from the grasp of the Fates
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

When wickets are bowled and defended,
When Isis is glad with "the Eights,"
When music and sunset are blended,
When youth and the summer are mates,
When Freshmen are heedless of "Greats"
And when note-books are covered with rhyme,
Ah! these are the hours that one rates—
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

When the brow of the Dean is unbended
At luncheons and mild tête-à-têtes,
When the Tutor's in love, nor offended
By blunders in tenses or dates,
When bouquets are purchased of Bates,
When the bells in their melody chime,
When unheeded the Lecturer prates—
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

* *Cf.* "Suggestions for Academic Reorganisation."

Envoi

Reformers of Schools and of States,
Is mirth so tremendous a crime?
Ah! spare what grim pedantry hates—
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

Andrew Lang.

"*XXXII. Ballades of Blue China* 1888."

FRESHMAN'S TERM

RETURN again, thou Freshman's year,
When bloom was on the rye,
When breakfast came with bottled beer,
When Pleasure walked the High ;
When Torpid Bumps were more by far
To every opening mind
Than Trade, or Shares, or Peace or War,
To senior humankind ;
When ribbons of outrageous hues
Were worn with honest pride,
When much was talked of boats and crews,
When Proctors were defied ;
When Tick was in its early bloom,
When schools were far away,
As vaguely distant as the tomb,
Nor more regarded—they !
When arm was freely linked with arm
Beneath the College limes,
When Sunday grinds possessed a charm
Denied to *College Rhymes ;*
When ices were in much request
Beside the April fire,
When men were very strangely dressed
By Standen or by Prior.
Return, ye Freshman's Terms ! They *do*
Return, and much the same,
To boys, who, just like me and you,
Play the absurd old game.

ANDREW LANG.

"*Ban and Arrière Ban*," 1894.

TERMINALIA

SALVE Termine summe Terminorum
infinitaque Termini voluptas !
salvete, hospitium recens, sorores,
consobrinae, amitaeque,—ceteraeque.
consobrina placet domi forisque :
dulces, si modo mutuae, sorores :
placandasque amitas, puer, memento,
si vis colloquio frui puellae.
Aestas praeterit, imminetque Finis ;
i nunc, Subgraduate, pelle curas :
Horti, Commemoratio, Choreae,
Ludi, Prandia, Remigationes,—
quid non laetitiae reducit hora ?
gaude, Subgraduate, nil agendo.
Matutinus abi ; require Pratum—
laburni loca pendulo monili
et ranunculeo nitentia auro,
Maio castaneisque odora conis—
vestes exue : recreare fluctu :
dulces Isideae lavationes.
collegi citius redi Penates:
explorator adest : cibus paratur :
bullit Mochius humor : ova, salmo,
panis, cuncta vocant : eas, sodales
expergefacias inertiores.
dulces ante meridiem induenti
navalis toga candidaeque braccae,
bracchae finibus infimis retortae.
lecturasque secare dulce : dulces
post jentacula fumigationes.
Tutores vacua querantur aula :
Praeses dilaceret comas, genusque

inritabile saeviant Decani :
nullius miserere : temne libros :
per quadrangula lentus ambulato.
libans acta Diurna seu Rubentem,
cari non sine fistula vaporis.
cum Phoebi medius peractus ardor,
conto linter eat per Interamna ;
dum sudant alii, jace supinus,
fuma, perlege Gallicam novellam :
aut tu rete super pilam remittas,
aut spectaveris Undecim virorum
plagas, Antipodesque praeliantes.
quinta est hora, redi, revise amicos ;
fumant Serica pocla ; carpe fessus
plusquam sardanapaleam quietem.
tum convivia, musicique coetus,
serae vesperis ambulationes,
ludi, charta, joci, fragor, theatrum,
Campani latices, vel unda Oporti,
seu quem mitigat Usquebacchianum
aut Sodae liquor aut Apollinaris :—
dulce est desipere in loco studentis,
praetextuque laboris otiari.
Salve Termine summe Terminorum,
O conferte gravisque inanitate,
O dulcedine perlaboriose,
Saturnalia dissipationis.

A. Sidgwick (C.C.C., 1890).

A BALLADE OF THE BACKS

I LIKE my cousin, only she's
A Cambridge girl, and when I tried
To show her what I thought would please,
And play the Ciceronian guide,
She metaphorically "shied"
At all my darkly blue attacks,
And to each point I made, replied,
"You've *nothing* like the Cambridge Backs."

I thought those stately lines of trees
Through which the Cher and Isis glide
Would win her heart, but even these
It was her humour to deride;
E'en the Ashmolean she defied,
And still (the thought my bosom racks),
In smooth Fitzbilliambics cried,
"You've nothing *like* the Cambridge Backs."

We reached "the High": "now then, Louise,"
Said I, as Univ. we espied,
"Don't tell me Peterhouse or Caius
Can match this pile?" but cut and dried,
Her swift retort my hopes belied;
"One thing," she cooed, "your City lacks,
Though you have prospects fair and wide,
You've nothing like the *Cambridge* Backs."

ENVOI

Oxonians, doff your haughty pride,
And go and put your heads in sacks;
Though you may boast the Oxford Side,
You've nothing like the Cambridge *Backs!*

HARTLEY CARRICK
"The Muse in Motley."

OXFORD REVISITED

I WANDERED down "the Broad" and up "The
High"
As I was wont, in far off days, to do—
When lo, debouching from "The Grid," came two
Resplendent youths who, sauntering idly by,
Cast on my form a supercilious eye,
Whose glance said very plainly, "who are you
That dare obtrude yourself upon our view?
This place is ours, for we have bought it. Fly!"
I realised that I was on the shelf
In that brief moment; saddened and forlorn,
I paused irresolute upon my way;
Then, thinking that a dog soon has his day,
Strode on, till suddenly I found myself
Standing, like Ruth, "amid the alien 'Corn.'"

HARTLEY CARRICK.
"*The Muse in Motley.*"

NONSENSE VERSES ON OXFORD

THE Gothic looks solemn,
The plain Doric column,
Supports an old Bishop and Crosier;
The mouldering arch,
Shaded o'er by a larch
Stands next door to Wilson the Hosier.

Vice—that is, by turns,—
O'er pale faces mourns
The black-tasselled trencher and common hat;
The Chantry-boy sings,
The Steeple-bell rings,
And as for the Chancellor—*dominat*.

There are plenty of trees,
And plenty of ease,
And plenty of fat deer for Parsons;
And when it is venison,
Short is the benison—
Then each on a leg or thigh fastens.

JOHN KEATS.

DEAN GAISFORD AND HELEN DOUGLAS

HERE'S to the maid who so graceful advances,
'Tis fair Helen Douglas, if right I divine,
Cupid, thou classical god of soft glances,
Teach me to ogle and make the nymph mine.
Look on a Tutor true,
Helen, for love of you,
Just metamorphosed from blacksmith to beau—
Hair combed and breeches new,
Love has changed Roderick Dhu,
While every gownsman cries, wondering, "Oho!"

In Greek, I believe, I must utter my passion,
For Greek's more familiar than English to me,
And Byron of late has brought Greek into fashion,
There's some in his "Fair Maid of Athens"—let's see.
But this vile modern Greek
Never will do to speak;
Let me try—*Σώη μοῦ σᾶς ἀγαπῶ ?*
Pshaw! I don't like the tone!
Let me now try my own—
Κλῦθι μεῦ Ἐλένη, σοῦ γὰρ ἐρῶ.

But here comes a handsome young spark whom I plucked once.
Perhaps he'll make love to her out of mere spite;
Aye, touch thy cap and be proud of thy luck, dunce,
But Greek will go further than grins, if I'm right.
By Dis, the infernal god,
See, see, they smile, they nod;
Ω μοι δύστηνος ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.
O! should my faithless flame
Love this young Malcolm Graeme,
Ὀτοτοῖ τοτοτοῖ φεῦ πόποι ὦ.

Thank heavens ! there's one I don't see much about her
'Tis her townsman, the Tutor of Oriel, Fitz-James.
For though of the two I am somewhat the stouter,
His legs are far neater, and older his claims.
Yet every Christ Church blade
Says I have won the maid ;
Every one, Dean and Don, swears it is so.
Honest Lloyd, blunt and bluff,
Levett and Goodenough,
All clap my back and cry " Roderick's her beau."

Come then, your influence propitious be shedding,
Ye gnomes of Greek metres, since crowned are my hopes ;
Waltz in Trochaic time, waltz at my wedding,
Nymphs who preside over accent and tropes,
Scourge of false quantities
Ghost of Hephaestion, rise !
Haply to this my success I may owe ;
Come, sound the Doric string,
Let us in concert sing,
Joy to Hephaestion—Black Roderick and Co.

HENRY COTTON
(*Afterwards Archdeacon of Cashel*).

THE VISITOR

THOUGH to dinner, dear Censor, you kindly invite us,
I cannot your Visitor be,
For *incorporatus*, *annexus*, *unitus*,
You can't make a stranger of me.
The Chapter and Dean must go to the Queen
If they would their Visitor see;
The *Fidei Defensor* might visit the Censor
If he should invite her to tea.
But I'm the old man of the See, dear Strong,
You cannot eliminate me,
In the House I'm at home, as the Pope is at Rome,
How can you exist without me?
However you treat me, you cannot unseat me,
I am the old man of the See,
I am W. Oxon., D. D.; C. G.;
You cannot disintegrate me,
Yes, I *am* the old man of the See.

W. STUBBS (Bishop of Oxford, Ch. Ch.).
1825–1901.

[The Censor of Christ Church had asked the Bishop to return thanks for the Censor's Visitors, *i.e.*, those not on the Governing Body of the House.]

THE HIGHER LIFE

[Suggested by a proposal that "Oxford and Cambridge might be compelled to put a fair share of their resources at the service of workmen."]

WHAT, what has become of the labouring men who used to support the pubs,
The dockyard crew and the plumber too, and the caddie who carried our clubs? [of a Highland bull,
O whither has vanished the ox-like Hodge with the neck
And the muscular band who dug up the Strand whenever the Strand was full?

Stout Hodge has left the acres of mud that he tramped in his hob-nailed boots;
No longer he weeds the turnips and swedes—he's taken to Sanskrit roots;
And the lass that he loved in the long ago has lost her faithless man— [forever to *ăv*.
Poor milkmaid Jane awaits him in vain—he's wedded

There's nothing the plumber will drain to-day—not even a pint of swipes; [him of pipes;
He sports his oak and refuses to smoke because it reminds
And he'd sadly regret all the years he has spent in learning to solder and plumb
Were it not in the fates that a knowledge of grates should assist him to pass *Litt. Hum.*

The burglar's at home in his college rooms; he's used to living in quods;
And he's quite at his ease with his cribs and keys, so he hopes for a first in Mods. [a lump of ice,
Through the darkest passage he finds his way, as cool as
And his purple past should fit him at last for playing the *rôle* of Vice. G. K. MENZIES.

ON DICK, THE NEW COLLEGE CAT

WHILE venal Cats (leagued with degenerate curs,
Of faded prudes the four-legged pensioners)
On the soft sofa ranged in order due,
For eleemosynary muffin mew,
Regardless of the meed that Fame bestows,
Their tail a feather for each wind that blows ;
Thee, generous Dick, the Cat-controlling powers
Ordained to mouse in academic bowers,
Bade thee the sacred stream of sapience sip
And in Pierian cream thy whiskers dip !
Enshrined celestial cateries among,
The sable matron, from whose loins he sprung,
Who traced her high descent through ages dark
From Cats that caterwauled in Noah's Ark,
Stern, brindled nurse, with unremitting care
To high achievements trained her tabby heir,
On patriot Cats his young attention fixed
And many a cuff with grave instruction mixed ;
Taught the great truth, to half his race unknown,
" Cats are not kittened for themselves alone ;
But hold from Heaven their delegated claws
Guardians of larders, liberties and laws.
Let Cats and Catlings of ignoble line
Slumber in bee-hive chairs, in dairies dine ;
Shun thou the shades of Cat-enfeebling ease !
Watch o'er the weal of Rhedycinian cheese ;
The melting mantle of collegiate brawn
For heads of houses guard and lords in lawn ;
And keep each recreant rat and mouse in awe
That dares to show his nose in Golgotha.
So may the brightest honours of the gown

Thy riper years and active virtue crown !
Say, shall not cats, fraught with ethereal fire,
To seats of lettered eminence aspire ?
Caligula a Consul made his steed ;
What though the beast could neither write nor read,
Yet could he talents negative display,
And silence opposition with his neigh.
If Charles of Sweden swore he would depute
The senate to control, his old jack-boot ;
If modern taste a learned pig reveres
And pigs unlearned keep company with peers ;
If erst Rome's papal crown a gossip wore,
Then, Dick, thou mayst become Vice-Chancellor.
Might I but live, though crazy, old and sick,
To see thee stalk behind thy beadles, Dick !
Behold my brindled boy with conscious pride,
O'er convocated grizzle-wigs preside !
Hear thee, e'er I explore my latest home,
Confer degrees in Sheldon's spacious dome !
See thee in scarlet robe encase thy fur
And at St. Mary's venerably purr !
Then let me be translated to the skies
And close in welcome death these gooseberry eyes."

Fame says (but Fame a slanderer stands confessed)
Dick his own sprats, like Bamber Gascoigne, dressed ;
But to the advocates of Truth 'tis known
He neither staid for grace nor gridiron.
Raw sprats he swore were worth all fish beside,
Fresh, stale, stewed, spitchcocked, fricasseed or fried ;
Then swallowed down a score without remorse,
And three fat mice slew for his second course ;

But while the third his grinders dyed with gore ;
Sudden those grinders closed—to grind no more !
And (dire to tell !) commissioned by Old Nick,
A catalepsy made an end of Dick.

G. HUDDESFORD (Fellow of New College).

CLEANSING FIRES, FEB. 14, 1889

YOU ask me, then, what caused the fire
  Which devastated Mansfield College—
What if I let the facts transpire
  Which lately came within my knowledge!
It was a piece of High Church guile
To wreck the Nonconformist pile.

From Pusey House at dead of night
  I heard the furtive clinking latch;
A bearded form stepped into sight
  With lantern dark and silent match;
Muttering some words about "her cup,"
And something like "her smoke went up."

From Keble's dark monastic cells
  I saw two men in surplice come;
One carrying explosive shells
  And one some crude petroleum.
"Down with it"—so I caught the sound—
"Down with it even to the ground."

And one came from S. Barnabas,
  One from S. Philip and S. James;
I heard them swearing "By the Mass"
  They would devote to vengeful flames
An Institution which was meant
To propagate unmixed Dissent.

And there is evidence which lends
  A tone of truth to the report,
That certain of a Bishop's friends
  Came slily from the Lambeth Court,

And laughed, and said they'd put to rights
Vex'd questions of forbidden lights.

But why poor Fairbairn's house was fired
  While Hall and Library were spared,
I have not hitherto inquired,
  Yet some could tell us if they dared.
I think they might have burned at least
The Chapel for not facing East!

ANONYMOUS.

Oxford Magazine.

THE PLEASURE OF BEING OUT OF DEBT

THE man who not a farthing owes,
Looks down with scornful eye on those
Who rise by fraud and cunning;
Though in the Pig-Market he stand,
With aspect grave and clean-starched band,
He fears no tradesman's dunning.

He passes by each shop in town,
Nor hides his face beneath his gown,
No dread his heart invading;
He quaffs the nectar of the Tuns,
Or on a spur-galled hackney runs
To London masquerading.

What joy attends a new-paid debt!
Our manciple I lately met,
Of visage wise and prudent;
I on the nail my battels paid
The monster turned away dismayed,
Hear this, each Oxford student!

With justice and with truth to trace
The grisly features of his face,
Exceeds all man's recounting;
Suffice, he looked as grim and sour
As any lion in the Tower
Or half-starved cat-a-mountain.

A phiz so grim you scarce can meet
In Bedlam, Newgate or the Fleet,
Dry nurse of faces horrid!
Not Buckhorse fierce, with many a bruise,
Displays such complicated hues
On his undaunted forehead.

Place me on Scotland's bleakest hill,
Provided I can pay my bill,
    Hang every thought of sorrow;
There falling sleet, or frost, or rain,
Attack a soul resolved, in vain;
    It may be fair to-morrow.

To Headington then let me stray,
And take Joe Pullen's tree away *
    I'll ne'er complain of Phœbus;
But while he scorches up the grass,
I'll fill a bumper to my lass,
    And toast her in a rebus.

From "The Oxford Sausage."

* Joe (Josiah) Pullen's tree was an elm on the crest of Headington Hill, just—says Hearne—at the top of the Roman Way that falls down upon Marston Lane. It was planted by Pullen, of Magdalen Hall, who used regularly to walk to it and back (sometimes twice a day) for exercise in half an hour. Some of his walks Pullen used to call "a mug of two-penny," others "a mug of threepenny," according to the air of each place. He was an antiquarian friend of Hearne, and died about 1720.

BEN TYRRELL'S MUTTON PIES

ALL ye that love what's nice and rarish,
At Oxford, in St. Mary's parish,
Ben Tyrrell,* cook of high renown,
To please the palates of the Gown,
At threepence each makes Mutton Pies,
Which thus he begs to advertise.
He welcomes all his friends at seven,
Each Saturday and Wednesday even.
No trifles stale with art unjust,
Lurk in disguise beneath his crust ;
His pies, to give you all fair play,
Smoke only when 'tis market day,
And all must own how fresh his meat,
While Jolly's † porter crowns the treat.
If rumps and kidneys can allure ye,
Ben takes upon him to assure ye,
No cook shall better hit the taste
In giving life and soul to paste.
If cheap and good have weighed with men
Come, all ye youths, and sup with Ben.
If liquor in a mutton pie
Has any charms, come taste and try !
O bear me witness, Isis' sons !
Pierce but the crust, the gravy runs—
The taster licks his lips and cries,
"O Rare Ben Tyrrell's Mutton Pies"
But hold—no more—I've said enough—
Or else my pies may prove—a Puff.

From "The Oxford Sausage," 1758.

* Tyrrell, a cook in the High Street.
† Capt. Jolly reduced the price of porter from 6d. to 4d. a quart.

EPITAPH TO THE PIE-HOUSE MEMORY OF NELL BATCHELOR, AN OXFORD PIE-WOMAN

HERE deep in the dust
The mouldy old crust
Of Nell Batchelor lately was shoven ;
Who was skilled in the arts
Of pies, puddings and tarts,
And knew every use of the oven.

When she'd lived long enough,
She made her last puff,
A puff by her husband much praised ;
Now here doth she lie,
And makes a dirt pie,
In hopes that her crust will be raised.

From "The Oxford Sausage.

DAVID JONES OR WINE AND WORSTED

HUGH Morgan, cousin of that Hugh
Whose cousin was the Lord knows who,
Was likewise, as the story runs
Tenth cousin of one David Jones.
David, well stored with classic knowledge,
Was sent betimes to Jesus College,
Paternal bounty left him clear
For life one hundred pounds a year,
And Jones was deemed another Croesus
Among the commoners of Jesus.
It boots not here to quote tradition
In proof of David's erudition ;
He could unfold the mystery high
Of Paulo-posts and verbs in *μι* ;
Scan Virgil and, in mathematics,
Prove that straight lines were not quadratics.
All Oxford hailed the youth's *ingressus*,
And wondering Welshmen cried, "Cot pless us !"
It happened that his cousin Hugh
Through Oxford passed, to Cambria due,
And from his erudite relation
Received a written invitation.
Hugh to the college gate repaired
And asked for Jones ; the porter stared !
"Jones ! Sir," quoth he, "discriminate :
Of Mr. Joneses there are eight."
"Ay, but 'tis David Jones," quoth Hugh ;
Quoth porter, "We've six Davids, too."
"Cot's flesh !" cries Morgan, "cease your mockings,
My David Jones wears worsted stockings !"
Quoth porter, "which it is, Heaven knows,
For all the eight wear worsted hose."

"My Cot!" says Hugh, "I'm asked to dine
With cousin Jones and quaff his wine."
"That one word 'wine' is worth a dozen"
Quoth porter, "Now I know your cousin;
The wine has stood you, sir, in more stead
Than David, or the hose of worsted
You'll find your friend at number nine,
We've but one Jones who quaffs his wine."

BERNARD BLACKMANTLE.
In "The English Spy," 1825.

THE DEVIL AT OXFORD

SAINTS and sinners of every set
Ask the Devil to wine ;
All agree that they never met
A genius so divine :
At Brasen-nose he can swear and play,
At Balliol talk of science,
Blow the loud horn in Peckwater gay,
Blow the mild cloud at Bryant's.
Randall has sent him a hat,
Spiers has made him a wig ;
In cutaway coat and fringed cravat
He looks prodigiously big.
He can ride over hounds, he can handle a team,
He can play at billiards or pool,
Vingt-John is his favourite game, and 'twould seem
That of Hoyle he knew each rule,
As with the Dons, in serious sort,
He plays his rubber and drinks his port.
Of Tennis he knows a little
Of Quintain a little more,
For cricket he cares not a tittle
And votes the boats a bore ;
For at his own place, he was heard to say after
He never had been much accustomed to water.

"*Phosphorus Squill*," 1847.

PARODY ON GRAY'S "ELEGY"

THE sullen Tom proclaims the parting day
In bullying tone congenial to the place,
The Christ Chuch misses homeward trip to pray
And High-street leave to solitude and space.

O'er the dim scene in stillness steals the night,
Save where the whistling 'prentice bars the shutter,
Or rapid mail-coach wheels its droning flight
Or tinkling plates forebode the approach of supper.

Save near yon tower, where now she sits and sighs,
Curses some miscreant Ralph that luckless lass,
And as her sixpence by the moon she tries,
Shakes her despairing head, and finds it brass.

Beneath those domes in Gothic grandeur grey,
Where rears that spire its old fantastic crest,
Snug in their mouldy cells from day to day,
Like bottled wasps, the sons of Science rest.

The unwelcome call of business-bringing morn,
The dull ox lowing from his neighbouring shed,
The tythe pig's clarion, or sow-gelder's horn,
Ne'er wake these fattening sleepers from their bed.

Their bile no smoking chimneys e'er provoke,
No busy breeding dame disturbs their nap,
Their double chins no squalling bantlings stroke
Climbing their knees for rattles or for pap.

VIEW IN BROAD STREET IN 1793

Drawn by J. FARINGTON *and engraved by* J. C. STADLER

To face p. 378

Let not pert Folly mock their lecture's toil,
  Their annual Gaudy's joys and meetings mellow,
Nor Quin's ghost hear, with a disdainful smile,
  The short and simple commons of a Fellow.

The boast of cooks, the lordly venison,
  The rich ragout, and liver-tickling jelly,
Down the red lane inevitably run,
  And at the best can only fill the belly.

Nor you, ye spinsters, these poor men abuse
  ('Tis want of money rather than of wit),
If thus their backward threepence they refuse,
  To your inviting charms and Billy Pitt. *

Can Madan's † voice provoke the dull cold clay,
  Or Price's ‡ system, that implies a wife,
Or aught the rosy goddess has to say
  When once a man is bent on single life?

Perhaps 'mid these unsocial yews is placed
  Some head, once member of the "Chosen Few" §
Hands that the dazzling diamond might have graced,
  Or tipt with ecstasy the billet-doux.

But Fashion to their eyes her motley page
  Rich with the rags of France would ne'er unrol,
Through this they lost "the ton," "the thing," "the rage,"
  And all the soft enamel of the soul.

* Mr. Pitt's tax on births.
† Madan, the author of "Thelypthora."
‡ Price on "Population."
§ An Oxford club.

Far from the turbid paths of maddening strife
Their fireside wishes never learn to stray,
Along the turnpike road of even life
They keep the jog trot tenor of their way.

Yet e'en their bones from surgeons to protect,
Some friendly tablet in the chapel aisle,
With snivelling cherubs and fat angels decked,
Excites the casual tribute of a smile.

The name bedizened by the pedant muse,
The place of fame and elegy supplies,
Who many an LL.D. and A.B. strews
That bid the admiring Freshman read and rise.

For who at Hymen's block in youthful bloom,
His scholarship and freedom e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the common room
Nor sighing cast one farewell-wish behind?

HENRY HEADLEY (Trinity College, *d.* 1788).

THERE was a great dunce at the Tavern
Whose skull was a large empty cavern,
He could eat, drink and hunt,
Play cricket and punt,
Which is all that they want at the Tavern.

There once lived at Magdalen Hall
A man who knew nothing at all,
He was fifty-three
When he took his degree,
Which is youngish for Magdalen Hall.

There was a young man "unattached"
Whose clothes were all threadbare and patched,
He drank tea and read
Till he muddled his head
Then went in for honours and scratched.

There was a young man of St. Albans,
Who drank all the beer in the Hall cans,
When they said, "You will burst,"
He replied, "I'm athirst,"
So they left him in peace at St. Albans.

There was a pale scholar of Queen's,
Who lived on potatoes and beans;
When they said, "Take to meat";
He replied, "Such a treat
We seldom indulge in at Queen's."

There was a great scholar of Balliol,
Who was asked what he knew of Gamaliel,
    He said 'twas a hill
    And examiners still
Remember that scholar of Balliol.

There was a young person of New
Who a stone at a man's window threw,
    So the whole of the place
    Was sent down in disgrace,
For there's wisdom and justice at New.

From "Lays of Modern Oxford," 1874.

A MATRICULATION AT BALLIOL

I GO, God save me,
To Dr. Davey,
Of Balliol College Head ;
And when he came,
My own sweet name,
In modest manner said :

Dear Tom, his wig
Is not so big
As many Doctors more,
And so I may
Presume to say
His wisdom is the more.

So instantly
To look at me
For fellows two did he send ;
And, luckily,
Whom should I spy
In one but a very good friend ?

Oh, my dear Thomas,
Indeed I promise
That I was very glad,
Without examination
Or any vexation,
To swear away like mad.

As they provide them
To *dare* my *fidem*
And go to the Vice-Chancellor ;
And, nothing loth,
To buy an oath
Of which he was the seller.

He then a book,
Very shabby to look,
Gave me, wasn't that kind ?
For which nice gift
Indeed I left
But one-pound-four behind.

Now I'm on clover.
When all is over,
When, without being examinated,
I'm capp'd, gown'd and swore,
And what is more,
To conclude, matriculated.

R. SOUTHEY,

In a rhyming letter to T. D. Lamb, describing his admission to Balliol in 1792.

EPIGRAMS AND SHORT PIECES

OXFORD'S POETS

ALMA novem genuit celebres Rhedycina poetas—
Bubb, Stubb, Grubb, Crabb, Trapp, Young,
Carey, Tickell, Evans.

ON BARTEN HOLIDAY'S PLAY, "MARRIAGE OF THE ARTS," ACTED BEFORE JAMES I. IN CHRIST CHURCH HALL, FEB. 13, 1617

AT Christ Church "Marriage" done before the King,
Lest that those mates should want an offering,
The King himself did offer—what? I pray.
He offered twice or thrice to go away.

ON MONDAY OF OXFORD

GOD bless the Sabbath! Fye on worldly pelfe!
The week begins on Tuesday: Munday has hanged himself.

THOMAS CAREW (C. C. C.).
1598–1638.

ON A FAT GENTLEMAN AT OXFORD

WHEN Tadlow walks the streets the paviors cry,
"God bless you, Sir!" and lay their rammers by.

Gentleman's Magazine, Nov. 1783.

ON TADLOW, A FAT GENTLEMAN

TREAD not here, gentle passenger, too hard,
For Tadlow lies under this whole churchyard.

EVANS.

ON THE UNIVERSITY ABOUT TO BE LIGHTED WITH GAS

EXULT, ye Wesleyans, whom haughty St. Mary's
In full cry long since hath been hunting,
Now groan in your phrenzy and such like vagaries,
And hail as your Bishop Jab Bunting.
For e'en Alma Mater, that Orthodox Lady
With whom ye have fought a long fight,
'Mid the gloom of her cloisters, so dreary and shady,
Is converted and owns the New Light.

Gentleman's Magazine, 1820.

ON MR. HEARN, THE OXFORD ANTIQUARY

"POX on't!" says Time to Thomas Hearn,
"Whatever I forget you learn."

PEMBROKE THE HUMBLE TO CHRIST CHURCH THE AMPLE

TRUCE with thy sneers! thou proud, insulting college!
Tho' not much known, we may be men of knowledge.

The Festoon, 1766.

ON THE BURSAR OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXON, CUTTING DOWN A FINE ROW OF TREES

INDULGENT Nature to each kind bestows
A secret instinct to discern its foes;
The goose, a silly bird, avoids the fox;
Lambs fly from wolves and sailors steer from rocks;
A rogue the gallows, as his fate, foresees,
And bears the like antipathy to Trees.

From "A Collection of Epigrams," 1727.

NOT every Don, who folds with sapient air
His arms upon his breast, clasps wisdom there.

J. S. Boone.

"HORSE" KETT OF TRINITY

"THE Centaur is not fabulous," says Young,
Had Young known Kett,
He'd say, "Behold me, put together wrong;
The head is horseish, but, what yet
Was never seen in man or beast,
The rest is human, or at least
Is Kett."

Walter Savage Landor.

[Kett, a well-known Don at Trinity in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, had an extraordinarily long equine head.]

ON REVISITING THE ANGEL INN, AT OXFORD

PRUDENCE and Grace once kept this place,
An Angel at the door;
Now the angel has fled: Grace is dead,
And Prudence turned a——.

[The Angel—which stood on the site now occupied by the New Schools in the High—was kept in the early eighteenth century by an inn-keeper who left it to his two daughters, Prudence and Grace.]

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARSHIP

OXFORD she a Christ Church had
To entertain the King,
And Cambridge had a Trinity,
And scarce one wise therein;
"Most Jacobed Charles!" * did Cambridge cry,
"Thou welcome art to us;"
An Oxford boy must have untrussed
If he had criéd thus.

* A Cambridge address to Charles I. had referred to His Majesty as *Jacobissimus*.

ON A REGIMENT SENT TO OXFORD AND A PRESENT OF BOOKS TO CAMBRIDGE IN 1715 BY GEORGE I.

THE King, observing with judicious eyes
The state of both his Universities,
To one he sent a regiment. For why?
That learned body wanted loyalty.
To th' other he sent books, as well discerning
How much that loyal body wanted learning.

AN HONEST PREJUDICE

A CAMBRIDGE Soph, just freed from band and gown,
Went to the sermon, with his friend in town,
The Doctor, not a Sherlock I suppose,
Soon lulled his audience to a sweet repose.
When now the slumberous charm was at an end,
Up starts Cantab, and wakes his drowsy friend:
He rubbed his eyes and cursed the stupid preacher,
And "Pray," says he, "d'you know this learned teacher!"
"No," cries the Soph, "but, ere the drone began,
"I knew our fate—for he's an Oxford man."

A TREACHEROUS DON

ONE hand and eye erect were close engaged
In prayer, and holy war with heaven waged;
The other eye obliquely viewed the gold,
Which into t'other hand was slyly told.
What! bribed within the consecrated walls!
Strange magic power of gold! to hush the calls
Of sacred promises, dissolve the ties
Of oaths! Was this thy morning sacrifice?
Transcendent knave! who could have closer trod
Thy friend Iscariot's steps, who sold his God?
Transcript of Judas! go, refund thy pelfe,
Then, like thy great exemplar, hang thyself;
For, while thou livest, the world will be surprised
To meet a walking hell epitomised.

[At the election of a Warden of Wadham in 1719 one of the Fellows was reported to have been bribed in the College chapel with a bag of gold. T. Hearne quotes the lines in his diary for that year.]

ON A LETTER FOUNDER AT OXFORD

UNDER this stone lies honest Syl,
Who dy'd—though sore against his will;
Yet in his fame he shall survive,
Learning shall keep his name alive;
For he the parent was of letters,
He founded to confound his betters;
Tho' what those letters should contain
Did never once disturb his brain.
Since therefore, reader, he is gone,
Pray let him not be trod upon.

London Magazine, 1735.

SCRIBIMUS INDOCTI DOCTIQUE

TWO men wrote a Lexicon, Liddell and Scott,
One half was clever, one half was not.
Give me the answer, boys, quick, to this riddle,
Which was by Scott and which was by Liddell?

ON THE UNIVERSITY'S REFUSAL TO SUBSCRIBE TO HIS TRANSLATION OF HOMER

COULD Homer come himself, distressed and poor,
And tune his harp at Rhedicina's door;
The rich old vixen would exclaim (I fear),
"Begone! no tramper gets a farthing here."

WM. COWPER, 1791.

CYRIL AND NATHAN

AS Cyril and Nathan were walking by Queen's,
Says Cyril to Nathan, " We're both of us Deans
And possibly Bishops may be ! "
Says Nathan to Cyril—" I care not at all ;
Only leave me my shares in my little canal
" And you may go swim in your sea."

[Cyril Jackson, the well-known Dean of Christ Church. Nathan Wetherell, Master of University College and Dean of Hereford, was one of the founders of the once highly profitable Oxford Canal.]

DR. JOHN BULL

ON the box with Will Whip, ere the use of the Rail,
To London I travelled, and inside the mail
Sat a Canon of Exeter ; on the same perch
Sat a Canon of Oxford's Episcopal Church.
Next came one who held—I will own the thing's small—
In the Minster of York a Prebendal stall.
And there sat a parson, all pursy and fair
With a vicarage fat and three hundred a year.
Now, good reader, perhaps you will deem the coach full ;
No, there was but one traveller—Dr. John Bull.

[Dr. Bull, Canon of Christ Church, and a typical pluralist of the eighteenth century.]

TO DR. TRAPP ON HIS TRANSLATION OF VIRGIL

READ the Commandments, Trapp, proceed no further
'Tis written there that thou shalt do no murther.

ON A BAD POEM SAID TO BE "EQUAL TO VIRGIL"

"EQUAL to Virgil"! Yes, perhaps,
But then, you know, 'tis Dr. Trapp's.

ON NOT CIRCULATING THE BOTTLE

OBADIAH Walker used to say,
"If *you* don't drink, your neighbour may."

[Ob. Walker was Master of University College in the reign of James II. He was a violent pervert to Roman Catholicism.]

ON THE TWO CANDIDATES FOR THE MASTERSHIP OF PEMBROKE IN 1864, DR. EVANS AND DR. BARTHOLOMEW PRICE

WE won't have Evans at any price,
And as for Price, O 'eavens.

[Dr. Evans was elected, and was succeeded at his death by Dr. Price.]

DAMUS PETIMUSQUE VICISSIM

GAISFORD and Sneyd each other's lectures seek ;
The one learns manners and the other Greek.

[Dr. Gaisford, Dean of Christ Church ; Dr. Sneyd, Warden of All Souls, and chiefly noted for his courtly manners.]

ON MEREDITH, ORGANIST OF NEW COLLEGE

HERE lies one blown out of breath,
Who lived a merry life and dy'd a merry death.

THE TWELVE CÆSARS IN THE BROAD

SI, quorum Fuerint capita ista horrenda requiras,
Quae praeter latam stant numerosa viam ;
Cæsareos totidem vultus, truncataque signa ;
Haud veri semper nuntia Fama refert ;
Terricula et pueris ego credo erecta protervis,
Ne nocua hi laedant proxima tecta manu.

M. AUBRY, 1795

ON THE DEATH OF DR. REYNOLDS, PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY

THY death it was hard for to be descried,
Living thou wast so dead, so mortified.

J. HEATH (New Coll., 1610).

RIVAL PLOUGHMEN

WHEN the versatile Bishop of Oxford's famed city,
Cast his eye on the chairman of Hardy's committee
Said Samuel—from Samson the metaphor taken—
"They plough with my heifer, that is, my Archdeacon."
But when Samuel himself leaves his friends in the lurch
To vote with the foes of the State and the Church,
It proves without doubt—and the spectacle shocks one—
That Dissenters can plough with Episcopal Oxon.

DEAN MANSEL.

[The chairman of Mr. Hardy's Oxford Committee, in his fight against Mr. Gladstone in 1865 for the representation of Oxford University, was Archdeacon Clerke. This led Bishop Samuel Wilberforce to say of the opposition, "They plough with my heifer." Dean Mansel retorted with the above.]

DR. FELL, DEAN OF CH. CH.

I DO not like thee, Doctor Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell,
But what I know, I know full well,
I do not like thee, Doctor Fell.

A LEARNED WELSHMAN

GRIFFITH POWELL, for the honour of his nation,
Wrote a book of Demonstration,
But having little else to do
He wrote a book of Elenchs too.

[G. Powell, Fellow, and afterwards Principal, of Jesus College, wrote "Analyses of the Posterior Analytics" in 1594, and "Sophistici Elenchi," 1598.]

A SMALL SNOB OF BALLIOL

A SMALL snob of Balliol had an idea
That Joseph was loved by his Arimathea ;
And, coining a word in the fashion of Grote,
Said that Herod held office as Scholekobrote.

σκωληκόβρωτος, *Acts XII.* 23.

TO BOTH UNIVERSITIES

YE famous sister Universities,
Oxford and Cambridge, whence proceeds your hate ?
Brothers' rare concord do ye imitate,
Each greeting each with mutual injuries ?
Brothers fall out and quarrell, I confesse,
But sisters love ; for it becomes you lesse.

Why strive ye sisters for antiquity ?
Cannot your present honour you suffice ?
Why strive ye sisters for that vanity,
Which if ye saw as 't was, you would despise ?
You must make love ; love is your surest hold,
Others must honour you and make you olde.

THOS. BASTARD, 1598.
From "Chrestoleros."

L'ENVOI: TO OXFORD

FAREWELL! for whether we be young or old,
Thou dost remain but we shall pass away;
Time shall against himself thy house uphold,
And build thy sanctuary from decay;
Children unborn shall be thy pride and stay.
May earth protect thee and thy sons be true,
And God with heavenly food thy life renew,
Thy pleasure and thy grace from day to day.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

From "An Invitation to the Oxford Pageant."

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